

The
SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES

WITH
A GENERAL HISTORY
OF THE
PAST RELIGIOUS
AND
INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS
OF THE
COUNTRY



A CENTENARY TRIBUTE

REV DAVID EVANS M.A.

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THE
SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES;
AND
HISTORY OF WELSH LITERATURE,
ETC.



REV. THOMAS CHARLES OF BALA.

THE
SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES,
THEIR
ORIGIN, PROGRESS, PECULIARITIES, & PROSPECTS;

WITH INTRODUCTORY CHAPTERS ON

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL STATE OF THE
COUNTRY FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE BEGINNING OF
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF
THE WELSH VERSIONS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

A Centenary Tribute.

BY THE
REV. DAVID EVANS, M.A. (LOND.),

GELLIGAER ENDOWED GRAMMAR SCHOOL, CARDIFF.

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PREFACE.



IN the year 1880 the centenary of the establishment of the Sunday Schools of England was celebrated. Many Welsh schools, in the exuberance of their zeal for the cause of Sunday Schools, and deeply sympathizing with every movement tending to extend their usefulness, but quite ignorant of the fact that the Sunday Schools of the Principality had an origin and a history entirely apart from those of England, heartily joined in the English celebration. These, at the time, never expected that any future call would be made upon their esteem and loyalty in connection with their own. Others, though having a faint idea that their system was indigenous and in many respects unique, still could not resist the strong impulse which they felt for honouring the institution, at the same time tacitly understanding that if it should be decided to hold a centenary for Wales, their demonstration would be none the less hearty and patriotic because of the forestalled outburst of 1880. A third class, punctually enlightened to some extent by their leaders in the history of their own schools, remained content to rejoice in spirit only with their English brethren, reserving the outward manifestation until the time when it should be agreed

upon generally that the event of their inauguration should be commemorated. Since then the subject has received a considerable amount of attention in the organs of the various religious denominations, and some of them in their corporate capacity have already arranged the time for holding the centenary. The general assembly of the Calvinistic Methodists, held in Liverpool, in June, 1881, fixed upon the year 1884, for the celebration; but for reasons which may become apparent from a perusal of this work, changed it to 1885, and in this they expect all other bodies to join.

Many works on the origin of the English Sunday Schools, and on other phases of that great movement, were especially written for the centenary of 1880, which have been much appreciated by the people generally. It is not unreasonable to anticipate that a similar feeling of curiosity and inquisitiveness, for important facts in connection with their national institution, will be aroused in the Welsh mind by such an interesting event as a centenary. In fact, provisions are already in course of elaboration to satisfy this craving, and works in the Welsh language have been announced to appear, before that time, on the subject. Though wholly ignorant of the plan and scope which such works may assume, and even granting that they may be in every respect excellent productions, still it is not uncharitable on my part to assert, that on account of the barrier of language, they will fail to give either information or pleasure to many who feel deeply interested in these institutions. It may seem at first anomalous to maintain that a work on a purely Welsh institution, and whose proceedings have been hitherto almost wholly carried on in that language, is a desideratum in English. Nevertheless, this I hope to be able to show is the case, and shall now proceed to

adduce some considerations in support of this view of the subject.

1. Schools which were originally wholly Welsh, in fact were established through the medium of that language, have now for many years become altogether English. Many instances of this class will at once occur to those who are acquainted with the country. In the border counties the number of these schools is very considerable. A work in the language they understand can alone enable the members to know the history of the good old people who laboured through evil and good report to secure for them this inestimable boon.

2. There are many schools in Wales connected with the various English causes, which are now being rapidly extended under the auspices of the various Welsh denominations to meet the requirements of this transitional state of things, whose model and spirit are entirely native, and which are looked upon as having quite a Welsh origin. The members of these again evidently need an English work to enable them to trace their descent to its proper source, and intelligently to join in honouring the memory of their illustrious founder.

3. Even the English Churches of the Principality, which are now becoming numerous and influential in the large towns and seaports, and which from the beginning were exclusively English in type, organization, and sympathy, still take such lively interest in all the religious movements that are peculiarly characteristic of their adopted country, that it may be safely assumed an account of the Sunday Schools of the country, in a language which they appreciate, cannot fail to be looked upon with favour. English people have now become very general throughout the Principality; and to their credit be it said, most of them, once having become resident, take

very kindly to the various institutions of the country—its eisteddfodan, antiquities, literary gatherings, and other social peculiarities. Apart, therefore, from all religious considerations, an institution in which Welsh traits are so prominently developed might be expected to be an object of peculiar interest.

4. Many children of Welsh parents, though brought up in Welsh Sunday Schools, yet from their more frequent use of English in the day schools, prefer all intellectual exercises in this language. As these schools become more general and higher in efficiency, the number of this class of children will be continually on the increase, and no doubt at a greater ratio for the coming hundred years than for the past. Opinions differ much with regard to the probable duration or disappearance of the Welsh language. The Departmental Committee, appointed to inquire into the condition of intermediate and higher education in Wales in 1880, maintain that “there is every appearance that the Welsh language will long be cherished by the large majority of the Welsh people, and that its influence upon the progress of their education, and upon their prospects in competing with English-born students, will be for an indefinite time but little less in the future than it has been in the past.*” Incidents from time to time, however, transpire to show that they did not become possessed of all the evidence on the subject. The influence of railways, of the elementary schools, of the daily press, and other causes, threaten to make shorter work upon the dear old language than is generally anticipated. It is a significant fact that at a written examination of a Sunday-School district in West Glamorganshire, comprising seventy-six schools, almost entirely Welsh, held in 1882, it has been reported that “in the class between

* Report, p. xlviii.

twelve and eighteen years of age, thirty-four candidates out of sixty-nine wrote in English; and of the class under twelve, three-fourths wrote in English." And if they preferred to *write* English, it is certain they would be still more at home in *reading* the language. It is true that the quantity of Welsh literature of all kinds circulating among the adults is very great—in 1875 said to be no less in value than £100,000; but it must also be remembered that parallel with this, English periodicals and standard works are continually on the increase. The educated classes deal much more in English literature than in Welsh.

5. The last, but not the least important, consideration is the fact generally admitted, that there are several peculiarities belonging to the Welsh institutions which recommend themselves for approval to every one interested in Sunday-School work, of whatever country or language. English people from time to time have generally assisted in the amelioration of the Principality. As will be seen from a perusal of the following pages, their sympathy with Wales assumed an eminently tangible form through the active liberality of Mr. Gouge and his friends. Rev. Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, and Rev. Thomas Charles of Bala, received very great encouragement in their labours from the constant flow of English money to replenish their oft-drained treasury. On the other hand, England has not been altogether unindebted to Wales for some precious original ideas which cannot be estimated by any material equivalent. From Wales the project for organizing adult schools was introduced, first into England, and afterwards into America. The present hold of Wales on the elder scholars, and the adult population generally, is a peculiarity of its system of Sunday Schools, which England and many other countries would feel

proud of possessing. Wales, finally, supplied the first, if not the mightiest impulse to the formation of that noble institution, the British and Foreign Bible Society, which has proved to be at once both one of the kingdom's greatest blessings, as well as the source of its greatest honour.

Five chapters of the present work have been devoted to what has been described as introductory and subsidiary. A word or two, perhaps, may be desirable, in explanation of this course, though the relevancy of the matter treated therein will be felt to be, it is hoped, not far to seek. From the schools to their exclusive text-book is not an unnatural step; and the two chapters on the translation and circulation of Scriptures may be looked upon as a necessary adjunct to show how the blessed volume became procurable for the schools. Besides, if the proposed revision of the Welsh Scriptures, as has been accomplished with the English, will be undertaken, it is expected that a short *resumé* of the history of all former versions, will be deemed not inopportune. The short chapter on Welsh literature is intended to throw a little light on a field which has been hitherto, comparatively speaking, a *terra incognita* to most English readers. The account of the direct educational provisions of the country previous to the rise of Sunday Schools will serve as a background to the picture of the more popular institution, from one of which—the circulating schools—it was the immediate and almost necessary outcome. And lastly, with regard to the chapter on the opposition shown from time to time to the improvement of the people, one beneficial effect, at least, which it is hoped it may produce, is to throw some light on the sinfulness of that narrow bigotry and bitter sectarian animosity which has been for generations the bane of the country; but in which of late, happily, there have been pleasing signs of dissolution and decay.

In the execution of the work I have been materially assisted by the inquiries of previous authors, on the various departments of the subject. No labour has been spared in consulting, on almost every occasion, the original productions, rather than transcribing them at second hand. There is less need of specifying any here, inasmuch as each quotation is acknowledged when made. Two, however, I think, need special mention—Sir T. Phillips's work on "Wales," and Judge Johnes's "Essay on the Causes of Dissent in Wales." To the former I am indebted for a concise statement of most of the educational statistics of the Principality up to 1846. Those subsequent to that time I have been able at some pains to continue, on similar lines, myself. Both these authors, on matters affecting the various denominations, have been cited to the reader in their own words, as they are generally admitted to be thoroughly impartial in their utterances, whether they give an opinion as judges, or state a fact as witnesses.

In conclusion, I may be permitted to add that I have undertaken this work from no consciousness of having any special qualification for executing it. Such as they are can be presented in modest and unpretentious terms. I have great regard for the Sunday Schools of my country, being indebted to them for most of my early training in Scriptural knowledge; and for some years now have turned my attention to their history and constitution. I have had the honour of being engaged as a teacher in them from a comparatively early time of life; and when other duties called me away from this, I have continued my humble co-operation in perfecting the district unions, in organizing the various associations recently introduced, and in adding a small quota to the literature of the schools, in the vernacular. My experience as teacher in

various classes of day schools enables me, I presume, to speak with some authority on questions pertaining to method, organization, and discipline.

At the same time, no one can be more conscious of imperfections, both in the conception and execution of the work. It is customary in offering a new work to the public, to crave the indulgence of the reader and the critic. This, I feel, I can solicit on more plausible grounds than most, when it is remembered that the work has been carried on, in the midst of other pressing and often distracting duties, at spare moments only, and at considerable inconvenience to refer to public consulting libraries.

Before finally dismissing my humble tribute, for the perusal of the public, I wish to express my ardent wish and prayer that it may serve to perpetuate the memory of the good and devoted men who laboured so honourably in their foundation; that it may make known the excellences of the system beyond the pale of the Principality; that it should furnish a pretty accurate gauge of the true extent and qualities of the institution at the end of its first centenary; and that it may create new zeal in all labourers in this department of the Saviour's vineyard for retaining what has already been secured, and bringing about still greater improvements, so that at the end of the second hundred years of its existence, greater triumphs shall have to be recounted than those which have been imperfectly described in these pages at the end of the first.

GELLIGAER ENDOWED GRAMMAR SCHOOL, CARDIFF,
1st August, 1883.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS— TRANSLATION AND CIRCULATION OF SCRIPTURES—THE NEW TESTAMENT 	1

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS— TRANSLATION AND CIRCULATION OF SCRIPTURES—THE WHOLE BIBLE 	23
--	----

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS— SPREAD OF GENERAL LITERATURE 	49
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS— DIRECT EDUCATIONAL PROVISIONS 	73
---	----

CHAPTER V.

HINDRANCES AND OPPOSITIONS TO PROGRESS 	106
--	-----

CHAPTER VI.

THE RISE OF METHODISM, AND EARLY YEARS OF MR. CHARLES	129
---	-----

CHAPTER VII.

THE EARLIEST SABBATH SCHOOLS OF WALES 	156
---	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE WELSH SUNDAY SCHOOL SYSTEM ...	176
--	-----

CHAPTER IX.

	PAGE
CHARLES'S COADJUTORS	192

CHAPTER X.

PECULIARITIES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES—(a) <i>Members and Subjects of Study</i>	214
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

PECULIARITIES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES—(b) <i>Internal Organization</i>	236
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

LATER MODIFICATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS	258
---	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES AND THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY	295
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LATER YEARS OF CHARLES'S LIFE	314
--	-----

CHAPTER XV.

A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES	342
---	-----

CHAPTER XVI.

CONDITIONS OF THE FUTURE PROSPERITY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES	363
---	-----

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

MR. CHARLES'S PORTRAIT	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
FACSIMILE OF TITLE PAGE TO SALESBURY'S NEW TESTAMENT ...	22
FACSIMILE OF TITLE PAGE TO DR. MORGAN'S BIBLE ...	48
Y NEUADD, LLANDOVERY, FORMERLY THE RESIDENCE OF VICAR PRICHARD	61
PORTRAIT OF REV. THOMAS GOUGE	86
PORTRAIT OF ROBERT RAIKES	157
MR. CHARLES'S HOUSE AT BALA	180
PORTRAIT OF REV. OWEN JONES, GELLI	194
MARY JONES ON THE WAY—CADER IDRIS IN THE BACKGROUND ...	298
CHARLES'S MONUMENT AT BALA	334
RAIKES'S STATUE ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT	341
"THE ROCK FROM WHENCE THEY WERE HEWN"	386

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES.

CHAPTER I.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS—TRANSLATION AND CIRCULATION OF SCRIPTURES—THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Introductory remarks—Opposition of the Clergy of the Ancient British Church to Popery—Augustine's Conference—Continued resistance—Augustin Thierry's testimony—This Church confined to Wales after the final Saxon Conquest—Wholly converted to Rome, except in the matter of supremacy, by the time of the Reformation—Wales more dilatory than England in taking up the principles of the Reformation—Means adopted to reform Wales—Translations of Scriptures—Versions in manuscript before the Reformation—The Four Gospels at St. Asaph—Dr. Davies' testimony—William Salesbury, first translator of New Testament—His coadjutors—Dr. Richard Davies, bishop of St. David's—Thomas Huet.

WALES, though the least of the four divisions which constitute the British Isles, possesses many interesting characteristics, entirely distinct from whatever may belong to the remaining three, and which naturally claim for it a certain amount of exclusive attention. These elements of special interest fall under the various heads of physical, antiquarian, social, and religious. The physical peculiarities of the country, it is true, consist neither in extent of territory, nor in the boldness and grandeur of scale of its geographical features; they afford a less imposing, though to many not a less

attractive, class of natural scenery, whose special recommendation is variety and exquisite beauty. Here the tourist meets with a happy combination of land and sea sights—beautiful valleys, romantic glens, well-wooded hill-sides, precipitous rocks, solitary mountain passes, charming lakes, picturesque waterfalls, well-defined bays, secluded creeks, and hill-lined estuaries, in such a compass as always to delight, never to weary, in the pursuit. In matters of antiquity again, although it cannot point to such gigantic relics of the past as the circles of Stonehenge and Avebury, still memorials of the past history of the country abound, in the forms of cromlechs, camps, castles and abbeys; but it chiefly demands attention in this respect, as being the home of a people who best represent the earliest inhabitants of the island whether of Iberian or Keltic origin, whose language is one of the most ancient now spoken in Europe, being now substantially the same as that spoken by Casivellaunus and Caractacus more than nineteen centuries ago, and whose literature is certainly more ancient than that of any of the Teutonic or Slavonic families of languages. Combining religion with antiquity, it must be granted, that through this nation alone, in connection with the Ancient British Church, we can trace our Christianity to a beginning in the island, entirely apart from the interference of a pope. Nearly five hundred years before Augustine and his monks landed in Kent, had the Britons enjoyed the glorious light of the gospel. It was a thoroughly organized and settled Church, delegating her bishops to the continental councils, long before Gregory dared to aspire to a supremacy over the religious affairs of the island, and whose dignitaries never acknowledged theoretically, either his or his successors' proud and unreasonable pretensions. Socially, again, Wales presents some noteworthy peculiarities. Here we have an example of a country incorporated with England for many centuries, whose people are entirely distinct from it in language and manners, but which has been loyal to the crown and existing government, with very few exceptions, throughout that period, and in which, according to the repeated testimony of the judges who come round the circuits, crime has been exceedingly rare. From morality it is not a wide and unnatural transition to religion, though it has been too much the custom of modern observers to ignore religion altogether, as a factor in the production of the morality of the Welsh. But no less remarkable is the organization which may

be looked upon as the permanent cause of this effect, the outcome of religious zeal, than the effect itself. In the Principality is found a phenomenon unique from all the other portions of the United Kingdom, if not from the whole world, of a people having provided for themselves, entirely by means of the voluntary principle, a system of religious worship and education which fully supplies their wants, and which has been kept up for the last century in a thorough state of efficiency and power. The religious zeal of the people has been developed in two prominent, though parallel, lines of action. By the one, they have provided places of worship throughout the country at their own expense, supporting at the same time an educated and devoted ministry to discharge preaching and pastoral duties; and by the other, they have organized a complete system of religious instruction through the instrumentality of the SUNDAY SCHOOLS, the history and peculiarities of which it is proposed to elucidate in the following pages.

Before entering upon the investigation of the special question as to the first starting of Sunday Schools in Wales, which, no doubt, is a natural and necessary topic for a centenary review, we shall, in order to appreciate more fully the work accomplished by these blessed agencies, ask the reader's attention to the general religious and intellectual state of the country prior to their establishment. In this preliminary undertaking we do not propose to go further to the past than the date of the Reformation in England in 1535, which will give us a period of about two hundred and fifty years to contemplate, with but somewhat meagre and scanty materials at our disposal, directly bearing on the question at issue. Anticipating here the result of this inquiry, we shall find that Wales, during this interval, was not left the waste and howling wilderness which has been too often taken for granted as being the condition of the country at the time; nevertheless, ample cause will be found to justify the wail of the best benefactors of the country over its comparatively benighted and neglected state, ere the sun of its prosperity arose in the multiplication of Sabbath Schools throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The thorough adherence and devotion of the Welsh clergy to Roman Catholic usages and errors, at the time of the Reformation and many years after, is in striking contrast to the manly and uncompromising rejection and abhorrence of them by the represen-

tatives of the Ancient British Church at the conference to which they were summoned by Augustine under Austin's oak, on the confines of Gloucestershire, in the year 603 A.D. Augustine, after having been successful in converting the Saxons to Christianity, was commissioned by Pope Gregory to bring about a union between the Ancient British Church and the Church of Rome, of which he had been appointed the recognized exponent in Britain. Though the British Church differed from the Romish in many other customs, Augustine expressed his readiness to tolerate all, if the Britons would only accept the Catholic usages of Easter and baptism, and unite with him in the common work of evangelizing the heathen. The native Church had continued from the beginning to keep Easter on the Sunday ranging between the 14th and 20th of the Paschal month, instead of following the custom established by the Council of Nicæa of holding it on the Sunday which happened on, or the next after, the first full moon following the 21st of March. With regard to baptism, too, they never practised the various symbolical ceremonies introduced into the Romish ritual—the sign of the cross on the forehead; the kiss of peace, in token of admission into spiritual fellowship; the tasting of milk and honey, to typify the blessings of the heavenly Canaan; throwing salt into the mouth, to indicate purity of speech; and white robes worn for seven days, figurative of the cleansing from sin. Augustine, at the first conference, had expressed his willingness to concede to the Britons all their usages except in the matters of Easter and baptism, but asserted peremptorily his claim to be acknowledged archbishop of the whole island by them, under pain of incurring the anger of the Romish Church, and that of the Anglo-Saxon kings. The Britons in reply to this demand said, that they could not give up their customs without the consent of their people, feeling at the same time, though not expressing it, a firm determination not to abjure their ancient right of independence. They therefore, with the consent of Augustine, postponed the decision to a second and more numerous conference, to be held at the same place. The delegates of the British Church to this second interview, consisted of seven bishops, selected from different parts of the country, with many of the most learned men of the great monastery of Bangor-is-coed, in Flintshire, and their Abbot Dunod, a man of very venerable years. With a haughtiness which ill became a follower of the meek and

lowly Jesus, Augustine received this august and influential body without even deigning to rise from his seat. The words uttered by Dunod, their spokesman, are very noteworthy, as showing in what light the Britons looked upon this intrusion of the Roman pontiff and his representative, as well as proving their just title to superiority over such a degenerate organization. "We will never," said he, "admit the pretended rights of Roman ambition any more than those of Saxon tyranny. In the bond of love and charity, we are all subjects and servants to the Church of God, yea, to the Pope of Rome, and every good Christian, to help them forward, both in deed and word, to be children of God; but for the submission of obedience, we owe that only to God, and, after God, to our venerable head, the bishop of Caerleon-on-Usk." (They continued to call him thus, though the archbishop lived at this time at Menevia, or St. David's, in Pembrokeshire.) "Besides, we would ask, why those who glorify themselves upon having converted the Saxons, have never reprimanded them for their acts of violence towards us and their spoliation of us."* Then, turning to his friends, he added, "As for this man, who does not rise and pay us respect when he is only our equal, how much greater the contempt he would manifest for us, if we admitted him superior."† Augustine repeated the formal summons to acknowledge him as archbishop, and then, assuming a threatening tone, thundered out, "Since you will not have peace with your brethren, you shall have to endure war with your foes; since you refuse to join me in teaching the way of life to the Saxons, ere long, by a just judgment of God, you shall have to suffer from the Saxons the bitter pains of death."‡ This was verified soon after, for, as it is supposed, at Augustine's instigation, Ethelfrith, king of the Northumbrian Angles, overthrew the Britons, near Chester, and massacred all the monks of Bangor—then reckoned at twenty-one hundred—all except fifty, who made their escape.

Notwithstanding the dire penalty which the Britons so unjustly brought upon themselves—not as Bede, whose writings in all that appertains to this dispute between the rival Churches, mark his strong Anglican aversion of the Welsh, as well as his own adherence to Roman customs, thinks they *rightly* deserved, as being "perfidious men who had slighted counsels in aid of their eternal sal-

* British MSS. quoted in vol. ii. of the "*Horæ Britannicæ*," p. 267.

† Bede, Hist. ii. 2.

‡ *Ibid.*

vation"—they were no readier afterwards to yield to the menaces, allurements, and intrigues of Saxon kings or papal emissaries, to renounce their ecclesiastical usages and independence. Thirty years after this, in the year 692, their fidelity to peculiar practices and convictions was tried in the matter of the *tonsure*. The British and Scoto-Irish Churches adopted the custom of shaving the front of the head, as far back as the ears, so that the hair formed a crescent, while the Romans shaved the crown of the head, leaving a ring of hair around it, in imitation of the crown of thorns. The Romans claimed for their style the authority of Peter, and ascribed the former to the institution of Simon Magus, his antagonist, whom they asserted, but without any proof, to have been bald. So great was the zeal of the Saxon bishops for the authority of Peter, that they deputed Aldelm, an illustrious abbot, to prevail upon Gerutius, the prince of Cornwall, to bring about the Welsh bishops to conform with the practice of the Romish Church. But with the exception of a few waverers, who bordered upon the Saxon territory, the great body of the Church remained true to their convictions, clearly proving that they were not so ignorant of Scripture doctrine as to be overawed by a pretended assumption of apostolic authority, and to yield to tradition the obedience they had only been accustomed to give to the Word of God.*

This jealousy of Popish aggression, so spiritedly inaugurated by the Welsh Church, continued with varying intensity and fluctuating fortunes, for many centuries,—in fact, it had not entirely disappeared, especially with regard to the claim of independency, at the dawn of the Reformation. Augustin Thierry, in his "History of the Norman Conquest," has summarized, with appreciative discernment, the struggles of the oppressed Church during this period. This able work deserves the special attention of the descendants of those neglected populations whose revolutions and influence in European civilization, he says, he has related "with that sentiment of pleasure, which one experiences in repairing an injustice." Judge Johnes, in his "Essay on the Causes which have produced Dissent from the Established Church in the Principality of Wales," speaks in very eulogistic terms of M. Thierry as a historian, describing him as "The French historian whose profound research

* "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru" gan D. Peter, pp. 211-216 ("History of Religion in Wales").

is surpassed only by his eloquence, and whose minute knowledge of Welsh history may put many of our countrymen to shame." * With such credentials for impartiality and ability, his testimony respecting the struggles of the Welsh Church to maintain her independence must command our unqualified assent. "The same Church," he remarks, "which expelled the censurer of the Frank kings from Gaul, gave to the Anglo-Saxon kings consecrated crosses for standards, when they went to exterminate the ancient Christians of Britain. The latter, in their national poems, attribute much of their disasters to a foreign conspiracy, and to monks whom they call unjust. In their conviction of the ill-will of the Romish Church towards them, they daily became more confirmed in their determination to reject her dogmas and her empire; they preferred addressing themselves, as they repeatedly did, to the Church of Constantinople, for counsel in theological difficulties. The most renowned of their ancient sages, Cattawg, at once bard and Christian priest, curses, in his political effusions, the negligent shepherd who does not guard the flock of God against the wolves of Rome. (The words referred to here: "*Gwae ny cheidw ei ddefaid, Rhag bleiddiau'r Rhufeiniaid, A'i ffon gnwpa,*" are by others ascribed to Taliesin.) But the ministers and envoys of the pontifical court, thanks to the religious dependence in which they held the powerful Anglo-Saxon kings, gradually, by means of terror, subdued the free spirit of the British Churches. In the eighth century, a bishop of North Cambria celebrated the festival of Easter on the day prescribed by the Catholic councils; the other bishops arose against this change; and, on the rumour of this dispute, the Anglo-Saxons made an irruption into the southern provinces where the opposition was manifested. To obviate foreign war and the desolation of his country, a Welsh chief attempted to sanction, by his civil authority, the alteration of the ancient religious customs; the public mind was so irritated at this, that the chieftain was killed in a revolt. However, the national pride soon declined, and weariness of a struggle constantly renewing, brought a large portion of the Welsh clergy to the centre of catholicism. The religious subjection of the country was thus gradually effected; but it was never so complete as that of England." †

* Page 142.

† "History of the Norman Conquest," by Thierry, vol. i. p. 48, Bohn's Edition.

Though many a long and eventful century intervened between the mission of Augustine and the Reformation, we are hardly prepared to find a resistance so well begun, terminating in that abject adherence, at least to the dogmas and practices of Rome, which was undeniably the case, before the dawn of Protestantism broke upon the country. Mighty and persistent influences were, no doubt, brought to bear upon the Church, besides the innate tendency of the human heart to degeneracy and backsliding; still, in contrasting the simplicity, purity, and holy courage of Dunod and his friends, with the idolatry, venality, and even apathy of their successors on the eve of the Reformation, one cannot help exclaiming in the words of the prophet, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!"* The only redeeming consideration is the fact, "that the religious subjection to papal supremacy was never so complete as in England." There might be here and there, in the remote corners of the land, a few true representatives of the early Christians, wailing over the errors of their countrymen in evil practices, as well as in allegiance to Rome; but those in authority had all been either purchased or overawed, and with regard to the mass of the population, the universal law was not falsified—"like priests, like people."

Wales was nothing behind England in its superstitious respect of relics, and ready belief in the "lying wonders" imposed upon the ignorant population by designing and crafty priests. After the suppression of the monasteries in England and Wales, visitors were sent to destroy the idols and other superstitious objects which might be remaining in various parts of the kingdom. A gentleman known as Dr. Ellis Price, of Plas Iolyn, having been sent on this errand to the diocese of St. Asaph, found at Llanddervel, near Bala, a huge rood, called *Derfel Gadarn*, or *Derfel the Mighty*, the patron saint of the church, which the men of North Wales held in high repute. There were from five to six hundred present as pilgrims worshipping it when Dr. Price came to discharge his mission. Some he found to have brought animals, and others money to offer to the idol; and the people generally believed it had the power of delivering from purgatory, whoever in any way enriched its shrine. The money of course soon found its way to the pockets of the priests. This imposture, like many others at

* Lam. iv. 1.

the time (1538), was exposed at St. Paul's; and as an old prophecy had said that it should burn a forest, it was made, in cruel mockery, to form part of the fire that consumed one friar Forest, who denied the king's supremacy. At St. David's, too, there was an image of the Virgin Mary, holding a wax candle in her hand, which drew thither an immense number of pilgrims. The people believed that this candle had been burning for nine years, and that it only went out because some one committed perjury in its name. The people of the neighbourhood of St. David's, at that time, were so superstitious that nothing could reform them.*

M. Thierry is of opinion, that "when the religious supremacy of the pope had been abolished in England, the Welsh, whom the Roman Church had never aided in their attempts to maintain their national independence, adopted, without repugnance, the religious changes decreed by the English Government."† This must refer to a time subsequent to the reign of Queen Mary; for between the years 1534 and 1558, we find the Welsh clergy turning from Popery to Protestantism, and from Protestantism to Popery, exactly in the fashion and much on the principle of their better known contemporary, the vicar of Bray. On the continent and in other parts of Great Britain, the Protestant religion had champions of talent, energy and piety, whose names rank amongst the noblest heroes of the world; but Wales had no eminent Protestant teacher at that time to inaugurate the Reformation; and when the nation was compelled by Acts of Parliament in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth, to renounce its errors and superstitions, the remedy was almost as bad as the disease; for as is almost always the case, a political revolution in which the religious element is not a contributory factor, only produces the excesses of irreligion, in exchange for the pitiable childishness of superstition.

That this was the character of the Welsh clergy and population at the time, is further confirmed by the fact of so few Welshmen having suffered martyrdom in the reign of Queen Mary. The Reformation in the true sense of the word, that is, an intelligent and deep-rooted aversion to the errors of Popery, and not merely a change of name from political considerations, made very little

* "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru," pp. 409, 410.

† "History of the Norman Conquest," vol. ii. p. 293.

progress under Henry VIII. and Edward VI. Only three persons are found among the whole martyrology of Wales at this period. Bishop Farrar, of St. David's, suffered death by fire, at Caermarthen, in the year 1555; Rawlins White, a poor fisherman, was burnt at Cardiff in the same year; and William Nichol, of Haverfordwest, in Pembrokeshire, was also burnt at this latter place in the year 1558, for having dared to utter some words against the authority of the pope. Thus of the two hundred and eighty-four who joined "the noble band of martyrs" in Britain at this period, Wales, from its general devotion to the Roman Catholic religion, contributed only three to the list.

When, however, Protestantism was well established in the kingdom, the ignorance and superstition of the Principality were not left unattacked both by legal enactments and by the voluntary exertions of able and energetic teachers arising within the nation itself. We have mentioned *legal enactments*, as one productive cause in the amelioration of Wales; the statement needs to be qualified by the explanation that the effect of these was almost imperceptible. In fact, whatever claims the Principality had on the Tudor princes, both on the score of blood relationship and devotedness to their cause, the requital from the government of the whole Tudor period was quite disappointing to expectations and disproportionate to deserts. Henry VII., though he owed his victory and his crown to the devotion of the Welsh, who flocked to his standard from North and South Wales, only marked his obligation to them by granting titles to a few of the most prominent leaders, and by placing in his own armorial bearings, the Cambrian red dragon, beside the three lions of Normandy. Henry VIII., it is true, at the petition of the Kymry, abolished the old March laws, and the separate jurisdiction of the Lord Marchers, which had been obstructing the course of justice and directly encouraging robbery and pillage; but this concession came with bad grace from a prince who, at the same time, sought to destroy the ancient customs of the people, the remnant of their social state, and even their language.* The legal enactments of Elizabeth again, though pretending high things by way of advancing the moral and spiritual welfare of the people, were left, as we shall see hereafter, a dead letter on the statute-book, so far

* "Archaiology of Wales," i. preface x.

as any active measures were taken to carry them to effect. The dawn, notwithstanding, did break upon the country during this period; and as it was this dawn, then darkly spread upon the hills, which has attained to its comparatively bright daylight in the Sunday School period, it cannot be looked upon as alien to the more immediate object of the present work, to trace the progress of this blessed light, throughout its checkered course to the rise of Sunday Schools. If this branch of our subject requires a more definite description, it may be termed **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.** For the further elucidation of this inquiry, it will be advantageous to try to review the state of the country under these three aspects, as shown by (1) *The propagation of the Holy Scriptures among the people*; (2) *The circulation of other books and the spread of literature generally*; (3) *The planting of day schools whose direct object was to teach the reading of the Bible, and the inculcation of its doctrines and morality.* The remainder of this chapter we propose to devote to the first of these divisions. Introductory to this inquiry again, before dwelling at greater length upon the exertions to spread printed Bibles among the people, it may be interesting to refer briefly to the accounts we have of,

THE WELSH VERSIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES IN MANUSCRIPT BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

In the absence of any copy of a translation of the whole Bible, or portions of it, made before the Reformation, being now extant, the proof that such did exist must rest entirely on references and inferences. It is generally believed that the Holy Scriptures were translated into the Ancient British tongue, for the use of the Ancient British Church, as early at least as the days of Constantine, 316 A.D. He is said to have ordered the Bible to be written and sent to every part of the empire after the great destruction of the Scriptures, during the persecution under Diocletian, and it is very natural to conclude that he did not leave his countrymen, the Britons, to be destitute of them. Eusebius, who wrote in the fourth century, says that the Scriptures had been then translated into every language, both Greek and barbarian, throughout the world; and Theodoret, in the fifth century, has written

words to a similar effect. Whether these words are to be taken literally, or are merely intended as a general statement, meaning a very extensive area, or all over the East only, is a question which cannot now be decided. With regard to the Ancient British Church, Carnhuanawc, in his "History of Wales," summarizes the result of the inquiry he made into the subject in the following words: "It is possible, and indeed not improbable, that portions of the Scriptures had been translated for the use of the Church in the early ages, else I do not know how the British Church could have held the general services, except she was less privileged than other Churches; but it has been already shown that the reading of the Scriptures formed a part of the public worship in every Church of which we have any record." *

Coming lower down, the proofs are more positive of the existence of some kinds of version, or translation, of portions of the Bible. Taliesin, a noted bard living near Llanrwst, who flourished about 540, made a successful effort, in his way, to bring the truths of certain portions accessible to the people. He made a kind of metrical paraphrase of "The ten plagues of Egypt," "Moses' Rod," and some further lines concerning God and Christ.

There is an unmistakable reference to a copy of the four Gospels belonging to the cathedral of St. Asaph in the year 1282. It was considered old then, as is shown in the letters patent granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the priests of St. Asaph, giving them permission to carry it about the country for exhibition; but there is no means of ascertaining who the author was, or the date of its original production. The letter granted by the Archbishop was written in Latin, to the following effect:—

"The circular of John, Archbishop of Canterbury, permitting the Canons of St. Asaph, in Wales, to carry about the Scriptures.

"The Brother John, etc., to all the priests, as well as the laymen, in the Dioceses of Coventry, Lichfield, Hereford, and all the Welsh Dioceses, health and everlasting peace in the Lord. The Book, or words of the Gospels belonging to the Church of St. Asaph, generally known under the name of ENEGLTHEN,† which is, as we

* "Hanes Cymru" gan y Parch. Thomas Price, p. 216.

† This is a word of difficult etymology, arising most probably from corrupt orthography. Can it have any connection with the Greek εὐαγγέλιον, the Gospel, further disguised purposely for the sake of inspiring greater respect?

have learnt, in great repute and regard by the inhabitants of all grades in parts of Wales and neighbourhood, and which, for more reasons than one, is occasionally carried about the country as a sacred thing, by the priests belonging to the above Church. We, therefore, being disposed to sanction such practice, desire you to pay every honour to the Book and the persons who are described here as carrying it about, praying that you, for the respect you have to Christ, who is the Author of the Gospels, will permit the aforesaid priests, with the above-mentioned Book to sojourn among you, and that they should be caused to rejoice, because they received peace and safety in their departure, their condition, and return to their own place.

“Given under our hand at Lambeth, July 14th, in the year of our Lord, 1282.” *

This copy remained at St. Asaph until the time of Bishop Goldwell, in 1555, every trace of it being lost then. Goldwell lost his bishopric on the accession of Elizabeth, because he would not turn Protestant. He went to Rome, and died there. It is not unlikely that he took this manuscript with him, and that it may be still found in the archives of the Vatican. One thing is certain, it was not at St. Asaph in the time of Bishop Richard Davies, four years after, who, as we shall find hereafter, would have surely mentioned it if it was there.

Portions of the Bible were also rendered into a kind of metrical paraphrase, by Dafydd Hiraddug, a respectable poet, who flourished about 1349. The subjects of his songs were, a portion of the first chapter of the gospel according to Luke, the song of Zacharias, the angel's address to Mary, the song of the three young men in Babylon, the song of Simeon, and a great part of the Psalms.

This subject of manuscript versions of the Bible, before the printed issue, has been fully discussed by Bishop Davies, in a letter addressed to the Welsh people, published as an introduction to William Salesbury's Testament. We shall insert this letter here, reserving our further notice of its author, until we come to treat of the printed editions:—

“I never succeeded to get a sight of the whole Bible in Welsh; but when a boy, I remember to have seen, ‘The Five Books of Moses,’ in the house of an uncle of mine who was a learned man,

* Quoted in “Hanes y Bibl Cymraeg” gan Thomas Levi, pp. 14, 15.

though no one perused the book or set any value upon it. It is a doubtful matter whether an entire Bible has been seen throughout all Wales, since the time that the Welsh were robbed of all their books. But before that time, it is my firm belief that the Bible was common enough in Welsh. The perfect faith of the martyrs, both clerical and lay, is a proof that they had the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. We also possess in the Welsh, many sayings and proverbs, remaining still in force, which were drawn from the very core of Holy Writ, and from the midst of the gospel of Christ; which is a sufficient proof that the Holy Scriptures were in the head of all classes of men, when those sayings were originated and brought to general use. These sayings are—‘God and enough;’ ‘Without God, without everything;’ ‘And the Word of God uppermost;’ ‘The Son of grace;’ ‘Who toils not, and prays not, deserves not his bread;’ ‘Everybody’s Church in his heart;’ ‘As true as the Gospel;’ ‘It is no wonder that a golden post will not grow through the roof of the wicked;’ ‘Ill will the devil keep his servant;’ ‘Let us thank God for food, and the ability to eat it;’ ‘God’s blessing on the work;’ and others of the same kind. Many personal names in use among the Welsh from the earliest times is an additional proof; such as Abraham, bishop of Menevia (St. David’s); Adam Fräs (the stout), one of the bards; Aaron, one of the chiefs of Glamorgan; Asaph, bishop of St. Asaph; Daniel, the first bishop of Bangor; James, son of Idwal; Joseph, bishop of Menevia; Samuel Benlan, a learned priest; Samson, the twenty-sixth and last bishop (archbishop) of Menevia; and others such who are often recorded in old pedigrees. This shows that Holy Writ was well known to our ancestors of yore. The poetry of Taliesin, chief of the bards, verifies the same, who lived in the time of Maelgwyn Gwynedd in the sixth century.”

The destruction of books referred to in the above letter is supposed to have taken place during the bloody wars of Owen Glyndwr, 1400–15, and the suppression of the monasteries under Henry VIII. A great number of very valuable Welsh manuscripts was also burnt in the Tower of London, by one Scolan, whose name is now only connected with that act of barbarity.* These manuscripts had been carried there from time to time by the various Welsh chieftains, to while away their time, when detained as prisoners by their

* Warrington’s “History of Wales,” p. 344.

English conquerors, so that the Tower for some years was the chief repository of Cambrian lore. A striking evidence, from its necessary impartiality, of the whole Bible existing during the Middle Ages, in the Welsh tongue, is given in the prologue written by Richard Purvey to his revision of Wycliffe's Bible, published about A.D. 1388. In this he says that his purpose, as that of Wycliffe had been, was to give an English Bible to the English people. "He appeals to the authority of Bede, of Alfred, and of Grostete, to the examples 'of Frenshe, and Beemers (Bohemians), and Britons.'"^{*} But it is quite clear that the translators for the printed editions profited nothing from the labours of their predecessors, as Dr. Davies, one of the first who came forward to take compassion on his then benighted countrymen, testifies that he was acquainted only with the Pentateuch, and that no further than a boy's memory of having seen a copy. In giving a somewhat detailed account of the various Welsh editions during the period upon which we have now entered, we propose to present the reader with short biographical sketches of the translators and principal propagators. The first name to claim our attention is

WILLIAM SALESBURY.

In the year 1562, being the fifth of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, an Act was passed ordaining that the whole Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, together with the Book of Common Prayer, should be translated into the British or Welsh tongue. The preamble of this Act is interesting as confirming what has already been advanced with respect to the intellectual state of the country at the time. It states that "the most and greatest part of Her Majesty's most loving and obedient subjects inhabiting within Her Highness's dominion and country of Wales, are utterly destitute of God's Holy Word, and do remain in like or rather more darkness and ignorance than they were in the time of Papistry." It therefore enacted with the view of accomplishing the design that the work of translation "should be superintended, used and acknowledged, by the Bishops of St. Asaph, Bangor, St. David's, Llandaff, and Hereford, and adopted in the churches by the first day of March, 1566, under a penalty of forty pounds each, if not completed. That

^{*} Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible"; Art. "Authorized Version," p. 1667.

one printed copy at least of this translation was to be provided for, and, to be in each church in Wales, read by the priests at the time of Divine worship, and on other occasions, for the benefit and practice of all who wished to go to church for that purpose. Until this translation of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer should be finished and published, that the priests in Wales, should read at the time of public worship, the Epistles, Gospels, the Lord's Prayer, the Articles of Christian Faith, the Litany, and such other portions of the Book of Common Prayer, in the Welsh language, as should be approved by the afore-named Bishops. That, not only during this interval, but ever after, an English Bible also and a Book of Common Prayer, should be had in every church and chapel throughout Wales, there to remain, that such as understood them might read and peruse the same; and that such as understood them not, might, by conferring both tongues together, the sooner attain to the knowledge of the English tongue."

Notwithstanding the high authority of an Act of Parliament, and the threatened penalty of forty pounds, like Damocles' sword hanging over their devoted heads, the bishops paid little attention to the statute, and no translation of the Bible was forthcoming by 1566. Indeed, as far as the Bishops were concerned, it would never have been accomplished. One reason assigned for this delay is, that many in authority wished the Welsh to learn the English tongue; and it was thought that by keeping the Scriptures from them, this object was most likely to be secured. Some try to excuse the bishops by saying that the time was too short—only three or four years,—and that the Act neither appointed men to do the work nor fixed the salary for their labour; that to keep the law would have cost more to each of the bishops than the amount of his fine. When God, however, has any work to do, the instrument to accomplish it will not be long without making its appearance. Help having failed from the bishops, God caused "deliverance to arise from another place." The translation of the New Testament was completed within a year to the limit prescribed by the royal decree, and that of the whole Bible within twenty-two years; the latter by a gentleman whom the bishops had no hand in electing or appointing, and of whom we shall speak fully hereafter; the former, by William Salesbury, with some co-operation of the bishops in the final publication, at least, if not in the first appointment.

William Salesbury, the principal translator of the first printed Welsh New Testament, was the second son of Ffoulk Salesbury, Esq., of Plas Isaf, Llanrwst, Denbighshire. His grandfather's name was Robert Salesbury, who was the fourth son of Thomas Salesbury, of Lleweni, near the town of Denbigh. His grandfather came to the possession of Plas Isaf through his marriage with Gwenhwyfar, only daughter and heiress of Rhys ab Einion Fychan of that place, and who was descended from some of the ancient princes of Wales. The original form of the name was Saltzburg, and there is an account of one Adam de Saltzburg coming over with William of Normandy in 1066, to one of whose descendants of the same name Henry II. gave the palace of Lleweni, when it was taken from Prince David. The Rev. Walter Davies (Gwallter Mechain), in the "Gwylledydd" for June, 1826, says that "the Salesburys were of Norman origin, but that by marrying with Welsh heiresses, these, like other respected Normans of the names of Herbert, Stradling, Basset, Turberville, etc., became patriotic Welshmen, as regards blood, language and affections."

The exact date of William Salesbury's birth is not known, but it is certain to have been very early in the sixteenth century. He received the first rudiments of his knowledge in Wales. From thence he went to Oxford, but there is some doubt whether he resided at St. Alban's or the Broadgate (now Pembroke College), when an undergraduate. From Oxford he removed to London, to study the law first at Thavies' Inn, and afterwards, some say, at Lincoln's Inn. It is believed he was conversant with nine languages, beside Welsh and English, viz. Hebrew, Caldee, Syrian, Arabic, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish. In this he surpassed his nephew, a second cousin's son—the Venerable Archdeacon Edmund Prys, author of the Metrical Psalms, who also acquired his eight languages.

When Salesbury undertook the task of translating the New Testament, probably at the instigation of the bishops as well as his own inclination, he lived at a place called Cae Du, in the parish of Llansannan, in the county of Denbigh, a remote district, now quite out of the ordinary commercial thoroughfares of the day, and then still more remote, between the towns of Denbigh and Llanrwst. Strange to think, this remote district has become noted for its production of eminent men in the literary annals of the Principality. In modern times, Rev. Henry Rees, one of the most effective pulpit

orators of his day; his brother, Dr. William Rees, poet, preacher, and lecturer; and Iorwerth Glan Aled, of similar descriptions in a lower degree, are connected with the place by birth; and Sir Charles J. Watkin Williams, formerly member of Parliament, first for the Denbighshire boroughs, then for Caernarvonshire, now one of the Justices of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, by parentage, though not by birth. A very plain and old-fashioned room was, a few years ago, shown in the house of Cae Du, where it is believed he carried on his important work, and which had purposely been constructed on a most secret plan, in order to avoid the wrath of his persecutors. During the reign of Mary, his Protestant zeal had rendered him obnoxious to the Queen and the Papists. This room, therefore, was so constructed as to have the door open to it through a part of the chimney in order to escape discovery. On the death of his brother, Robert, who left behind him no son, only two daughters, he became possessed of much property, together with the princely palace of Plas Isaf, but he continued to reside for some time after at his remote nook of Cae Du. He went up to London to superintend the printing of his Testament, which was published in the year 1567.

This first edition appeared as a quarto volume, of 399 leaves, not pages (for only one side of the leaf is numbered), and printed in the usual black letter of the day. The contents are placed at the head of every book and chapter, and an explanation of difficult words on the margin; but there are signs of some new plan being adopted in the last books, for from 2 Timothy on, which is not the case before, all the books are divided into verses, which seems to imply that this was the suggestion of Dr. Davies, though in his first contribution he follows the original plan. Salesbury had two colleagues in the work of translation—the book of Revelation being subscribed with the initials T. H. C. M., or Thomas Huet, chantor or precentor of Menevia (St. David's), and the first epistle to Timothy, the epistle to the Hebrews, the epistle of James, and the two epistles of Peter, with the initials D. R. D. M., intended to mean Dr. Richard Davies, Menevensis. The title-page is interesting as showing the sources from which the translation was made. It reads to the following effect:—"The New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. Taken as far as the untranslatable words permitted, from the Greek and Latin, the words not found in the

original being put in a different letter. Besides, every word supposed to be unintelligible, whether from the idiom of the country, or from want of use, has been marked, and explained on the opposite margin." At the end of the volume, it is added :—"Imprinted at London, by Henry Denham, at the costes and charges of Humphrey Toy, dwelling in Paule's Church Yard, at the sign of the 'Helmet.' *Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.* Anno 1567. Octob. 7." Humphrey Toy, mentioned here, to whom the Welsh people are indebted for his liberality in bringing out the first New Testament at his own expense, was the son of Robert Toy, who carried on a printing business, near The Bell, in St. Paul's Churchyard, from 1541 to 1546. His widow and her son continued the business. Mrs. Elizabeth Toy, a lady of great spirit and energy, is supposed to have been a Welshwoman, which explains to some extent the interest taken by her son in the publication of the New Testament.*

Besides the text the volume contains in its beginning a calendar, at the end a table to find out the epistle and gospel to be read in the church throughout the year, and to explain Matt. xiii. 44,† there is a very plain plate, representing men bargaining, with a stanza in Welsh recommending the readers to buy at all cost the pearl of great price. The most valuable additions, however, are the Welsh letter to his fellow-countrymen by Dr. Davies, of St. David's, portions of which have been already quoted, and a dedication of the work in English, "To the most virtuous and excellent Princess Elizabeth," in which he says that "his fellow-subjects had been but lately worshipping idols, bells, and dead men's bones, instead of the true God; that at one time none had been more unwilling than they to adopt the Popish religion, but latterly none had been more unwilling to relinquish it." He thanks the Queen for delivering thousands of his fellow-countrymen from the darkness of superstition and popery, and begs of her to cherish the version, and receive it to her library.

It must not be thought that this is the present authorized version of the Welsh Testament; compared with that it is far inferior in ease, simplicity, and accuracy. Many Greek, Latin, and English words are left in it, without any attempt at translation, as *hypo-*

* Sir Sam. R. Meyrick's "Heraldry," vol. i. pp. 182-3, quoted in Dr. Edwards's "Traethodau Llenyddol," p. 92.

† See Literary Notes at end of chapter ii.

criticet, parabola, membrana, orribil (horrible), *descendant*. At the same time, it must have been of great help, some years later, in preparing the authorized version, and even now, editions of it are published, as a work of curiosity, and out of respect to the pioneer of Welsh Biblical literature. The number of copies of the first issue is not known.

William Salesbury's death has been left in as great an obscurity as his birth, which shows how little regard the world very often pays to its best benefactors, at the time. Various years are given, ranging from 1560 according to Thomas Fuller, to 1599 according to Sir John Wynne of Gwydir. He published many other works, reference to which will be made in a subsequent chapter.

DR. RICHARD DAVIES.

As already mentioned, he was the principal colleague of Salesbury in translating the New Testament. His father's name was Dafydd Gronw, rector of Cyffin, near Conway, Caernarvonshire, where the son was born, in the year 1501. He also received his collegiate education at Oxford, being a member of New Inn Hall. In 1550, he was presented by Edward VI. to the vicarage of Burnham, and the parsonage of Maidsmorton, Buckinghamshire; but on the accession of Mary, he was obliged to flee the kingdom, when he went with his wife to Geneva, where he suffered many privations, and had nothing to depend upon but the alms of his more opulent fellow-refugees. Within three years of his arrival at Geneva he had learnt French so thoroughly as to be able to preach in that language, in consequence of which he was able to take the charge of a church there, and to live comfortably for the remainder of his sojourn. Three of his sons were born at Geneva—Thomas, Peregrine, and Gershom. On the death of Mary, he returned to his own country, and received back his livings from her sister Elizabeth. In January, 1560, he was appointed to the bishopric of St. Asaph, and fifteen months later, on the 21st of May, 1561, he was translated to the see of St. David's, where he lived for upwards of twenty years. While there he assisted Salesbury in translating the New Testament into Welsh. The same year as the Testament, the Book of Common Prayer was published by him and his coadjutor, for the use of the Church. On the death of the Earl of Essex, he published the sermon which he had delivered on

the occasion, at Caermarthen, in 1577. We must not omit to say also that he was a scholar of considerable merit, many of his compositions being still on record. His labours in connection with literature were not confined to Wales and the Welsh. He was one of the translators selected by Archbishop Parker for what is known as "The Bishops' Bible," which was published in 1568. In the Article on the Authorized Version, Guest,* Bishop of St. David's, is mentioned as sharing in this work, and taking the Psalms; but this is evidently a mistake, for there never was a Guest, bishop of that diocese, and moreover, if Dr. R. Davies is intended, it was not the Psalms that were entrusted to him, but the books of Joshua, Ruth, and the two books of Samuel.

Sir John Wynne testifies respecting his oversight of the see of St. David's, that "he presided over it in a manner worthy of himself, and to the honour of our nation." He kept a very good house, retaining in his service the younger sons of the best families in the country, to whom he gave an excellent sustenance, and a good education with his own children. But he is accused of having greatly impoverished the diocese in providing for his numerous family, by leasing the land, and allowing the houses to fall into ruins, a charge similar to that brought against Bishop Barlow in 1538. Dr. Davies died at the episcopal palace of Abergwili, on the 7th of November, 1581, aged eighty years. When rebuilding the church of Abergwili in the year 1850, the bishop's tomb was discovered. It consisted of a common slab, with only his name engraved, and the year in which he died. His coffin was also seen in the grave with some inscription round the edges, but only the name was deciphered. Dr. Thirlwall, the bishop of the diocese at the time, put up a marble tablet at his own expense, on the wall of the chancel above his tomb, with a full and elaborate inscription, embodying the chief incidents of his life as contained in this sketch. Before dismissing this subject of the first New Testament in Welsh, the little information must be added which we have, concerning the remaining translator, THOMAS HUET, who was the chief chantor or precentor of St. David's from 1562 to 1588, and also held the livings of Cefnlllys and Diserth, in Radnorshire. He died on the 19th of August, 1591, and was buried in the church of Llanafan, Breconshire.

* Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," p. 1674.

Testament

Newydd ein Arglwydd

JESV CHRIST.

Gwedp ei dynnu, yd y gadei yz ancyflia-
 ith, aie pnei gplydd o: Groeca'r Ulatin, gan
 newidio ffurf llythyren y gairiae. dodi. Ch labw hny
 y mae pop gair a dyblyp y botyn andeallus,
 ai o ran llediaith y'wlat, a: ancynefin.
 derp debydd, wedp ei noli aieg,
 lurhau ar' ledemyl y tnda.
 len gpdzrchiol.

bot golauni ir bpt, a' charno ddymion y tyfyllwrch



Mathew. xiii. f.
 Gmerthwch a veddwch opudd
 (Llyma'r Man lle mae'r modd
 Ac mewoban angen nybydd)
 I gael y Perl goel hapwedd

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS—TRANSLATION AND CIRCULATION OF SCRIPTURES—THE WHOLE BIBLE.

Interval between the publication of New Testament and The Whole Bible—Dr. Morgan first translator of Old Testament—Edition of Dr. Parry and Dr. Davies, of Mallwyd—First edition for the use of the population generally—Mr. R. Heylin and Sir T. Myddleton—Cromwell's Bible, 1654—Labours of Rev. Stephen Hughes—Rev. T. Gouge—Last edition of 17th century—The various editions of the 18th century—Rev. Moses Williams—Mr. R. Morris—Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge—Dr. Llewellyn—Rev. Peter Williams—Editions up to time of Bible Society—Tables of all the issues—General inferences.

MORE than twenty years elapsed, after the publication of the New Testament, before the whole Bible made its appearance. The time prescribed in the royal proclamation of 1562, within which it ought to have been produced, was being continually left more hopelessly behind; and the two men most likely to be able to execute the work, from having translated the New Testament, were already in their graves; but the instrument chosen of God to accomplish it, was all the time being prepared, and when hope was almost languishing into despair, from quite an unexpected quarter, the able worker made his appearance in the person of

DR. WILLIAM MORGAN.

Not far from the side of the railway which runs between Betws-y-coed and Festiniog, and about half way between the former station and Dolyddelen, in one of the wildest and most romantic parts of Caernarvonshire, is still to be seen, at least the site of, the house

where William Morgan was born. The exact locality is called *Gwibernant* or *Ewybrnant*, and lies in the parish of Penmachno. According to the first form of the word, which means "the dragon's dingle," the place is said to have derived its name from a destructive dragon which at one time haunted its seclusion and terrified its inhabitants. Though this derivation is more poetic, or at least imaginative, the interest of truth calls upon us to decide in favour of the more sober form of *Ewybrnant*, or the *rapid torrent*, descriptive of the rapid course of the brook, as it hastens along here, to join the much-admired Conway, at the Waterloo iron bridge. Like William Salesbury, William Morgan is said also to have descended from some of the ancient princes of Wales. His father's name was either William or John Morgan, and his mother was Lowri, daughter of William ab Ifan, ab Madog, ab Ifan Tegin, of Betws. Nothing of his early history is known, but he appears to have had a very liberal education, and upon this foundation he acquired, at St. John's College, Cambridge, the further preparation which enabled him to discharge so efficiently the great work he undertook. He graduated B.A. in 1568; M.A. in 1571; B.D. in 1578, and D.D. in 1583. In 1575 he was presented to the vicarage of Welshpool, Montgomeryshire, which is supposed to have been his first living. Three years later he was promoted to the vicarage of Llanrhaiadr-yn-Mochnant, Denbighshire, and there he conceived the idea of translating the Bible. When some of his parishioners got to know that he was engaged in the work, incited very probably by the papistical spirit which is against placing the Bible in the hands of the common people, and disliking him because of his holy living, and his denunciation of their wicked practices in his usual ministrations, they preferred some mean charges against him, first to his Bishop, and afterwards to the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was obliged to appear at Lambeth Palace to answer to the charge. Thither he went with an anxious mind, but it was so ordered by Providence, that what his enemies intended for his greatest hindrance in the work, should transpire to be of the greatest advantage to him. Archbishop Whitgift was much struck with the nobleness of his demeanour, and was not long in discovering that he was an excellent scholar, quite at home with both Hebrew and Greek, which led him soon to suspect the malicious libels of his accusers. One day the Archbishop asked him, "Do you know

Welsh so well as you know Latin, Hebrew, and Greek?" "I hope, my Lord," the vicar modestly replied, "you will allow me to assure you that I know my mother's tongue better than any other language." Understanding that he had already completed the translation of the Pentateuch, and discharging the complaints made against him by his parishioners, he encouraged him to prosecute the good work to the end, promising to render him all the aid at his disposal.

From this time forward, others became interested in his favour, to all of whom he gratefully refers in the dedicatory epistle to Queen Elizabeth, which introduces the volume. His words are, "and having commenced it, I should have failed, because of the greatness of the work and of the cost, and would have brought out the five books of Moses only, had not the Rev. John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, the patron of learning, defender of truth, and kind to our nation, assisted me, and supported me by his liberality, his authority, and his counsel to go on. Following his example, other good men came to my aid, viz. the Bishops of St. Asaph and Bangor" (Dr. Hughes and Dr. Bellot, it is supposed), "Dr. David Powell, Mr. Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster, Mr. Edmund Prys, Archdeacon of Merioneth, and Mr. Richard Vaughan, Rector of Lutterworth, afterwards Bishop of Bangor, Chester and London." There is no reason to think that Dr. Morgan undertook this work at the request of either the government or the bishops, but was simply moved by the feeling of want, to which he was an eye-witness; and his sole object was the glory of God and the good of his countrymen. The year in which he began the work is uncertain. From the fact that Whitgift was not promoted to the see of Canterbury until 1583, it is inferred that he could not have gone much beyond the Pentateuch, according to his own testimony, before that year, and still five years is but a short time to complete the work in the circumstances under which he was placed. That he was assisted in the work can hardly be doubted, though there is no record extant of any of his immediate colleagues. Most of the names mentioned in his dedicatory epistle could only have afforded him indirect assistance, such as granting him free access to their libraries, and probably reviewing or correcting some of the passages. While the work was passing through the press, he lived with the Dean of Westminster, and as a token of his grate-

fulness for this kindness he presented the Dean and Chapter with a copy of his Bible, which is still kept in their library.

The publication took place in the year 1588, the ever-memorable year in which the invincible Armada was shattered upon our coasts. It appeared in the form of a huge folio in black letter, and contained, in addition to the Old and New Testaments, the Apocrypha, the Calendar, and a few references on the margin. It is divided into chapters, each headed with its contents, and divided into verses. The leaves alone are numbered, and they amount to 555. The publishers were Christopher and Robert Barker, Tiger's Head, Paternoster Row.

In the absence of every testimony as to the number contained in this edition, the solution of this problem must be only a matter of conjecture. The intention of the Act of Parliament was to supply the parish churches, the chapels of ease, and collegiate churches with a copy. These at the time in Wales did not amount to more than from nine hundred to a thousand. When we consider that it is one thing to decree and another to execute, that this act failed to bring out a Welsh Bible at all, as far as it was concerned, and that the real hardly ever reaches the ideal, the probability is that the supply fell far short of meeting even this meagre demand.* The publisher of the English Bible thought an edition of fifteen hundred to be large for England, and therefore an edition of five or six hundred must be considered to have been proportionately greater for Wales.

Sir John Wynne, of Gwydir, endeavoured to detract from Dr. Morgan the honour of having translated the Bible, by maintaining that "he had received advantage and help from the works of Bishop Davies and William Salesbury, who indeed had translated a great portion of it, but that Morgan took all the fame to himself." It is a peculiar coincidence that Sir Thomas More, in his anxiety to establish a point against Tyndal, asserted that "he had seen English translations of the Bible, which had been made before Wycliffe, and that these were approved by the bishops, and were allowed by them to be read by laymen, and even by devout women" (*Dialogues*, ch. viii.-xiv. col. 82). The motives which actuated More and Wynne to make these assertions might not be the same, but the accuracy of the statements is equally doubtful.

* Gwyddoniadur, Art. Beibl.

There is no evidence that Salesbury and Davies had translated any of the Old Testament, and if they had, the labour of revision, as shown by the work accomplished by Morgan on the New Testament, was almost equal to an original translation. It is not to the honour of Wynne (being far less excusable than More, a Roman Catholic, in his jealousy towards Tyndal, a Protestant) to find that the occasion of this twitting originated in an ill-feeling which existed between Sir John and the bishop respecting the tithes. The honour of Dr. Morgan will ever remain unimpaired and untarnished. Among the galaxy of good and able men who in that age were the direct means of breaking the bread of life to the hungry, to Dr. Morgan must be allotted the primacy of honour, not indeed because he was the first in the field, but because unquestionably his labours were the greatest.*

Nor was he unrewarded during his life-time. In the year that he completed the Bible, he received the livings of Llanfyllin and Penant-Melangell; and in 1594, that of Denbigh was added to them. In 1595, in accordance with the special command of Queen Elizabeth, he was promoted to the episcopal chair of Llandaff, and in 1601 he was translated to St. Asaph, where he died on the 10th of September, 1604, and was buried in the cathedral, no one as yet having honoured him with even a monument to mark his resting-place, and commemorate his virtues. Sir John Wynne says "he died a poor man."

It was intimated above, that with regard to the New Testament, he only improved upon the translation of Salesbury, and incorporated it with the Old. Further than this, before his death in 1604, he had revised it again, and it was ready for the press. Whether he intended to issue a new edition of the whole Bible is not known, and it is equally uncertain whether his revised copy of the New Testament was published or not.

Amongst the names mentioned by Dr. Morgan as having assisted

* With so many references to the translators of the Welsh Bible and Testament being learned in Hebrew and Greek, there would seem to be no need of making a positive statement that the Welsh versions were made directly from the originals. But so persistent is the error fallen into by even intelligent Englishmen, to think they were made from the English, that in further refutation, the internal evidences plainly show that the Welsh does not follow the English, being in very numerous instances more faithful to the Hebrew and Greek originals.

him in the translation of the Bible, are found those of Dr. David Powell, of Rhiwabon, and Edmund Prys. While the others are thought to have given only indirect aid, these two very probably took an active part in the work, though the particular department taken up by each is not recorded. Both deserve a fuller account of their lives, but as they have enriched the literature of their country in other connections, we shall defer our sketch until the next chapter.

The year 1620 brings us to the third issue of Holy Writ in Welsh, and this time also the entire Bible, very much corrected and improved. It was the joint work of

DRS. RICHARD PARRY AND JOHN DAVIES.

Richard Parry was the eldest son, and heir of John Parry, of Pwllhaelog, near Ruthin. Documents do not agree respecting the year of his birth, but most believe it was about 1560. For a time he attended Westminster school, then under the mastership of Camden, the author of "Britannia," and one of the ripest scholars of his age. He afterwards completed his education at Oxford. In the year 1592, he was made Chancellor of Bangor, and in the same year, vicar of Gresford. In 1598, the title of S.T.P., or D.D., was conferred upon him, concomitant with his being made Dean of Bangor. On the accession of James I. to the throne of England, so high a notion had the king of his learning and piety that he was promoted to the see of St. Asaph, December, 1604.

In his dedication of this edition of the Bible, Dr. Parry enters at length to the motives and inducements which influenced him to undertake the work of revision. Among other things he says, "that the last edition of the Bible was exhausted, and that many of the churches were either destitute of a copy, or at least those to be found were both worn out and imperfect, and no one, as far as he knew, was thinking of a second edition. In view of this state of things, and urged by these considerations, he undertook the labour of improving the last translation. A revised edition of the English Bible had lately been issued under royal authority, and this had induced him to supply his countrymen with a similar improved and more accurate version of the Welsh Bible." Some object to this being called a *new* translation; but if it be right that the divines employed by King James to improve the former editions of

Tyndall and Coverdale should call their work a new translation, surely the changes and improvements introduced by Dr. Parry justify the calling of his issue a new translation. Salesbury's orthography was defective, and the language was stiff and very unintelligible. Dr. Morgan greatly improved upon this; but Dr. Parry brought the whole into such a state of perfection as to be a standard of the Welsh language unto this day. All subsequent editions of the Bible agree with this, and so Dr. Parry's translation of 1620 may be looked upon as the authorized version of the Welsh Bible. Whatever changes have been since introduced, they consist only in putting capitals for small letters, a new mode of spelling some words, and other slight alterations. This edition has done more than anything else in unifying the idioms of the different parts of the Principality, for whatever divergences exist in the colloquial talk of North and South Wales, the language of the pulpit is intelligible in all parts of the country, and this for the simple reason that it is the same version of the Bible which is used everywhere. Dr. Parry's edition was printed in London, by Norton and Bill, printers to his Majesty. A copy of it was presented to the king, which is still extant, and preserved in the British Museum. It is a folio edition, printed in black letter, divided into chapters almost entirely on the plan of Dr. Morgan's edition, with the references of King James's Bible on the margin. The number of copies issued is believed to be about five hundred. Dr. Parry presided over the see of St. Asaph from 1604 to the year of his death, in 1623. He held the living of Diserth, in Flintshire, with his bishopric, and used to spend some of his time there occasionally. There is a field still known as "Cae yr Esgob" (the bishop's field), adjoining the house in which he died, just two years after publishing the Bible. Dr. John Davies, of Mallwyd, rendered him material aid in the work. He was one of the most accomplished scholars of his days, and as he published many works of lasting value, a fuller reference to his life and connections will be made when we bring those into notice.

Dr. Llewellyn remarks that "for upwards of *seventy years* from the Reformation to the reign of Queen Elizabeth; for nearly *one hundred years* from the separation from the Church of Rome, there were no Bibles in Wales but only in the cathedrals, or in the parish churches and chapels. There was no provision made for the

country, or for the people in general, as if they had nothing to do with the Word of God, at least no farther than they might hear it in their attendance upon public worship once in a week. This is astonishing." * Judge Johnes explains this fact with the consideration, that "from the Reformation to the time of Elizabeth was a period of English bishops. The consequences of the system were similar to what they now are. The people were during the whole of that period without a translation of the Scriptures." † Bishop Richard Davies, in his preface to Salesbury's New Testament, ascribes also to the Welsh Bishops whatever enlightenment came to the Welsh people at this period. His words are : "No sooner did that wise and patriotic princess ascend the throne than she filled the Welsh bishoprics with native Welshmen ; men to whom Wales in fact owes all the religious light she at present enjoys, and but for whom it is more than probable she would have been, at this moment, a Popish country, exposed to the superstitions and miseries of a neighbouring and kindred people." The Welsh bishops no doubt deserve great praise for their immense labours in translating, improving and publishing the Bible at this time ; still, the form in which it appeared (a huge folio), and the cost of purchasing, rendered it very inaccessible to the population generally. The bishops evidently in the first place cared for the churches, and intended reaching the people only through public ministrations. In the year 1630, it occurred to some aldermen and citizens of the city of London to vary a little on the method, and issue an edition in a smaller form, so that the people might have a copy in their houses, which proved to be a very great boon. This was a small octavo, and consisted of the whole Bible, the Apocrypha, the Book of Common Prayer, and the metrical version of the Psalms. The expense was chiefly borne by

MR. ROWLAND HEYLIN AND SIR THOMAS MYDDLETON.

Mr. Heylin was a member of the family of Pentreheilin, in the parish of Llandysilio, Montgomeryshire. The meaning of the word *heilin*, is butler (*hail*, means a quantity, a service ; '*hail o ddiod*,' a service of drink ; the verb, *heilio*, means to deal out, to serve), and

* Historical Account of the "Welsh Versions and Editions of the Bible," p. 36.

† "Essay on the Causes of Dissent," etc., p. 99.

seems to have been given them, from the fact that this family had been hereditary butlers to the earls of Powis. Mr. Rowland Heylin removed to London, where in the course of a virtuous and prosperous life he became an alderman and sheriff. He never forgot his native country, and in concert with others framed the project of supplying his countrymen with the Bible in a portable little volume, the expense of the undertaking (which was no trifle) being chiefly borne by him. He brought out several other books at his own cost. He died in the year 1634, leaving no heir, and his property, through the marriage of his daughter, went over to a family of the name of Congreve. He was an uncle to Dr. Peter Heylin, the historian.

Sir Thomas Myddleton belonged to the illustrious family of Gwaenynog, Denbighshire. He was a son of Richard Myddleton, the governor of Denbigh Castle, during the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth. Here is an example of Normans by race, becoming in course of time, through intermarriages, Welshmen in language and spirit. Sir Thomas had three brothers—William, a poet, who assumed the *nom de plume* of Gwilym Canoldref, of whom more will be said again; Ffowk and Hugh, afterwards Sir Hugh Myddleton, who, in the reign of James I., brought the New River to London, and whose monument is now in Islington Green. Sir Thomas went up to London when young, and there became a wealthy merchant. He was made successively alderman, justice of the peace, and, in 1614, lord mayor of London. He purchased the estate of Chirk Castle, Denbighshire, and was the founder of the Myddleton family of that place. He shared with Mr. Heylin the expense of publishing the octavo Bible in Welsh. He is said also to have interested himself in the publication of two subsequent editions. The Rev. Stephen Hughes (of whom we shall have occasion to speak again), in his preface to a second edition of “Canwyll y Cymry” (The Welshmen’s Candle), usually called “The Vicar’s Book,” prays for the blessing of Heaven to rest upon him for his thoughtfulness and liberality on this occasion. “I pray from my heart,” says he, “upon God, that every temporal and spiritual blessing should fall on the head of every one of Sir Thomas Myddleton’s progeny in North Wales, and everywhere else. May God grant them innumerable blessings, like the sand of the sea, the grass of the fields, and the stars of heaven. And

may every one in Wales who loves God and longs for the salvation of immortal souls, unite to say from the bottom of his heart, Amen, and Amen, so let it be. O gracious Lord, bless the descendants of Sir Thomas Myddleton, and may his name remain honoured for ever."

It is more than probable that with reference to this edition, Vicar Prichard composed his "Advice to hear and read God's Word." In his quaint language he refers once and again to the cheapness of its price, being only a crown, and exhorts all to procure it, and study it well for the salvation of the soul. He says:—

" Mae'r Bibl bach yn awr yn gyson,
Yn iaith dy fam i'w gael er coron ;
Gwerth dy gryd cyn bod heb hwnw,
Mae'n well na thref dy dad i'th gadw."
(The little Bible now is ready,
In thine own tongue for one crown only ;
To get it, sell thy shirt, if need be,
'Tis more than any 'state to save thee.)

The piece consists in all of eighty-seven similar stanzas. We can hardly nowadays appreciate the value of such a boon as to get a complete Bible for five shillings. In the days of Queen Elizabeth and James I. wages were so low and the price of a Bible so high that it would have been necessary for a labourer to put by his earnings for thirty-seven years in order to be able to buy one. The crown Bible of Vicar Prichard, and surely the fourpenny one of our days, ought to be looked upon as marvels of cheapness.

In the year 1647, the New Testament alone was printed in a 12mo form, without the contents of chapters, and about one thousand copies were issued.

In 1654, the whole Bible was again issued in small octavo. As this was the first year of the rule of Cromwell, it was generally called Cromwell's Bible. The number of copies issued was six thousand, and this is the first instance of the exact number contained in an edition being recorded. Mr. Charles Edwards, author of "Hanes y Ffydd" (History of the Faith), furnishes us with this detail, but he omits to state whom the country was indebted to for this very liberal supply, as it must have been considered at that time. In "Llyfryddiaeth y Cymry" (The Bibliography of the Welsh), it is stated that Walter Cradoc and Vavasor Powell were instrumental

in bringing out this edition; but Dr. Llewellyn says "that we are indebted to Mr. Charles Edwards for its production." It is not unlikely that the three co-operated in the honourable work. Seeing that an Act of Parliament was passed at this time, providing for the spread of the Gospel in Wales, it is not improbable that this edition of the Bible was the result of the same authority. So intense was the religious feeling of the country at the time, and so great was the respect shown the Holy Scriptures, that Biblical phrases were interwoven with the common parlance of society. Such expressions as "The Lord of Hosts," "God with us," were the war-cry of battles, the mottoes of coats of arms, and the inscriptions on coins; and even personal Christian and surnames consisted often of Scriptural phrases. It is no wonder, then, that with so much religious fervour in England, Wales should not have been left destitute of an ample supply of the Word of Life. The demand was very pressing for the issue, since the last supply of both Testaments and Bibles had been completely exhausted. This same year, 1654, an edition of the New Testament, in a larger type, consisting of one thousand copies, was also published.

In 1672, an edition of two thousand copies (octavo) of the New Testament was issued, together with the Psalms in prose and verse. The prime mover in the publication of this was

REV. STEPHEN HUGHES.

This gentleman, who was directly connected with the next two issues of the whole Bible also, has deserved well of his country, and therefore demands here more than a passing notice. He was a native of the town of Caermarthen, being born about the year 1622. He obtained the living of Meidrym, in his native county, in 1645, and according to his prefatory song to the "Vicar's Book," had some connection with the parish of Merthyr, in the same county. By the passing of the Act of Uniformity, in 1662, he was among the two thousand ministers who were ejected from their livings, and had to cast himself upon the world for whatever maintenance he could find. More fortunate than most of his brethren, he married a lady of some means at Swansea, by the help of whose dowry, economy, and industry, he was enabled to devote all his time to the welfare of his country. He was an intelligent, methodical, and affectionate preacher, always delivering

the great truths of the Gospel with much unction. With the heavenly message he delighted to visit the remotest and obscurest corners of the land. As he was in much favour with the higher class, he would very often be permitted to preach in the parish churches, even after his ejection, which on such occasions would be filled to overflowing from the neighbouring parishes. This aroused the jealousy of some of the interested clergy, and at one time, in consequence of their prosecution, he was placed in Caermarthen prison, but soon liberated in a wonderful manner. He was the means of founding many of the dissenting congregations about his native town and Swansea. When preaching one day at Wernchwith, near Llanedi, in Caermarthenshire, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who had been brought up for the Church, went to hear him. This gentleman was tall, and altogether of a comely, commanding aspect, and quite unknown to the preacher. When Mr. Hughes saw him enter the place of worship he thought at once he was the civil officer coming to apprehend him and take him to prison. When the service was over the stranger came forward to greet Mr. Hughes, and took hold of his hand. "Sir," said the preacher, "I hope by giving you my hand I am not caught and made a prisoner." "No, my dear sir," replied the stranger; "but you have caught me." From that time forward he became a constant hearer at the meeting-house, and afterwards was known as the noted preacher—Rev. David Penry, of Llanedi Palace. Mr. Hughes laboured extensively in preaching the Gospel, founding churches, and editing useful books for the people. These manifold engagements before long began to tell upon his health. During his latter days, in the year 1688, he was very much afraid lest his mind should become deranged, and that he should say something dishonourable to religion. He used to refer often to this topic in his prayers, saying, "Lord, remember us in the pang of death, and permit us not to dishonour thee in our last moments." In this he was remarkably hearkened. After arranging his house, giving instructions to the church of which he was pastor, and committing his family to God, he turned his face to the wall and died without a pang. He was sixty-five years of age, and was buried at St. John's Church, Swansea.* He received the name during his lifetime, and which is still associated with him, of "The

* "Hanes Crefydd yu Nghymru," *passim*, pp. 561-593.

Apostle of Caermarthenshire." In the edition of the New Testament above referred to, he received assistance by way of subscriptions from Rev. W. Thomas, Dean of Gloucester, and four other clergymen from different parts of Wales.

In 1678, he was very actively engaged in bringing out the hitherto largest edition of the whole Bible, and which consisted of eight thousand copies octavo. With this also were incorporated the Apocrypha, the Book of Common Prayer, and the metrical version of Psalms by Edmund Prys. Mr. Hughes was associated in this work with Rev. THOMAS GOUGE, of London, and both patronized by Archbishop Tillotson. Mr. Gouge became an eminent benefactor of Wales at this time in many connections, but as he is chiefly known for the active part he took in the establishment of day schools, a fuller sketch of his life and doings will be found with our notices of the educational provisions of the period.* Before this issue of the edition of 1678, it was found, after an active search made for all the Welsh Bibles and Testaments in the country, in order to present them to the poor at once, that only twenty Bibles could be found in the city of London, and not more than thirty-two throughout England and Wales. The edition of which these probably formed a part, generally known as "Cromwell's Bible," was very defective in many respects. Words and whole phrases from many a passage had been inadvertently entirely omitted; and to prevent a recurrence of such blemishes, the whole work was carefully revised by Mr. Hughes, who, being quite conversant with the Welsh language, saw that every error was corrected, and the work in every department thoroughly well executed. Mr. Gouge gave away at once one thousand copies of this edition to the poor, and sent the remaining seven thousand to the chief towns of Wales, to be sold at four shillings each.

In the year 1690, another octavo edition of ten thousand copies was issued under the superintendence of Rev. David Jones, who had been ejected from Llandysilio, in Caermarthenshire, in consequence of refusing to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity. The chief patron of this edition was Thomas, Baron Wharton, who was a zealous Protestant, a supporter of the revolution of 1688, a faithful servant of King William, and one of Queen Anne's ministers during the most prosperous portion of her reign. Judge Johnes, in his

* See page 85.

table of the editions of the Welsh Bible,* says it was Stephen Hughes who was patronized by Lord Wharton in bringing out this edition. But this is evidently a mistake, inasmuch as Hughes died in 1688, unless he refers to the active preparation made by Hughes for another edition before he was cut off by death. Others beside Lord Wharton are known to have assisted Rev. David Jones, the most prominent among whom were some ministers and citizens of London. Dr. Calamy says that the ten thousand copies were distributed by the editor himself; it is well known that he was indefatigable in all the duties connected with the issue.

In this same year, 1690, a folio edition of one thousand copies, for the use of the churches, was published at Oxford, and generally called "Bishop Lloyd's Bible," because Dr. William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, had some share in its production. This Bishop Lloyd was one of the seven bishops who signed the petition against the Declaration of Indulgence made by James II., whereby freedom of worship was granted to the Roman Catholics, with whom Dissenters were also included. For their opposition to the king's wishes, the seven were committed to the Tower of London, but soon liberated on being brought to trial. Though Bishop Lloyd was the chief patron of this edition, the work of supervision was entrusted to Mr. Pierce Lewis, a gentleman of Anglesea, then at Jesus College, and who executed the work both accurately and well. This brings us to the last issue of the seventeenth century.

In 1718, an octavo edition of the whole Bible, consisting of ten thousand copies, was printed in London, and brought out under the patronage of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The object of this society was to supply the British people of all nations with the Bible and Book of Common Prayer. Hitherto every edition of the Welsh Bible had been brought out through personal exertions, and this was the first of a series undertaken by this society. It is generally called "Moses Williams's Bible," because it was the Rev. MOSES WILLIAMS, vicar of Defynog, in Breconshire, who superintended the press. Mr. Williams was a very learned man both in the Welsh and the classical languages; he translated many useful books into Welsh, and assisted Dr. Wotton in the publication of his "*Leges Wallicæ*." Several improvements were

* "Essay on the Causes of Dissent," p. 101.

introduced into this edition, such as the year of the world's age at the top of every page, and the Apocrypha, with the prayers and canons of the Established Church by themselves at the end. To meet the feelings of Nonconformists he left out this appendix from some copies of the edition, which came out a year before the others, in 1717. In 1727, another octavo edition of five thousand copies was issued by the same society, and under the superintendence of the same gentleman. At the end of the volume he appended a vocabulary of Hebrew and Greek words, which is still much appreciated; but as he left out the contents of the chapters and the marginal references, the whole edition had a much less favourable reception by the people generally.

In 1746, the whole Bible appeared in octavo from Cambridge, in an edition of fifteen thousand copies. It was superintended by Mr. RICHARD MORRIS, an officer of the Admiralty, called by the Welsh "Rhisiart Morys o Fôn," and the Bible is called "Bibl Morys." The editor was very conversant with the language and history of his country, and always ready to advance the welfare of his countrymen. This is the first instance of the adoption of the small Roman type in an octavo Bible, instead of the old black letter. The plan of Moses Williams's Bible was followed, only some additions were introduced, such as maps of the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness, the apostles' travels, and tables of money, weights and measures, which were supplied by Mr. William Jones, Sir William Jones's father. At the same time, this edition was somewhat marred by errors and blemishes which probably arose from the circumstance of the press and superintendent being so far apart. There is a marked progress perceptible now, in the number of copies issued at a time, which is to be explained by the fact of the Rev. GRIFFITH JONES, of Llanddowror, having now so much increased the number of readers by his circulating schools, of which a full account will be given in a subsequent chapter.* This edition had a special connection with those schools, and Mr. Jones had collected over £1200, which he handed over to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, towards the expenses. Some of the Nonconformists succeeded in obtaining a number of copies of this edition too, without the Common Prayer and Apocrypha. In 1752, Mr. Morris superintended another edition of the whole Bible,

* See page 93 et seq.

which was printed in London, and is as free from imperfections as any edition of Holy Writ hitherto published in Welsh. It numbered fifteen thousand copies, and like the last was published under the patronage of the Christian Knowledge Society. The issuing of these thirty thousand copies cost the society about £6000. The books were mostly distributed by the members or patrons of the society in Wales, and it was ordered that each book was to be sold for 4s. 6d. bound, but many were given to the poor connected with the schools. For this large and generous supply, the society, no doubt, deserves well from every Welshman.

The same year, 1752, two thousand copies of the New Testament with the Psalms were issued by the same society, and were a reprint of the edition of 1672.

In 1769, the whole Bible was again issued in octavo by the same society, and printed in London. The gentleman that was chiefly instrumental in procuring this edition for his countrymen was

DR. THOMAS LLEWELLYN.

The numerous references to Dr. Llewellyn in connection with this inquiry into the circulation of the Scriptures in Wales, excite in the reader, we presume, a desire to know a little more of his history. He was born in Penalltau-isaf, in the parish of Gelligaer, Glamorganshire. Having joined the Baptist Church at Hengoed, near his home, he was induced to give himself up to the work of the ministry. In order to prepare himself for the duties of his office, he spent a short time at Trosnant, near Pontypool, from whence he went to Bristol College, then under the superintendence of Mr. Bernard Foskett. Afterwards, he settled in London, where he also became an instructor of young men intended for the ministry. While following this profession, he was made a doctor of laws. He was very partial to his native land, and in his latter years divided his time pretty equally between London and Wales. Wishing to enlist a strong public opinion in his favour, and hoping it would strengthen his appeal for subscriptions to bring out a new edition of the Bible, he wrote an account of the former editions of the Welsh Bible under the title, "A Historical Account of British or Welsh Versions and Editions of the Bible, 1768," and which is still a standard work on the subject. This effort produced the desired effect. The number of copies issued reached twenty

thousand; the society printed several thousands more than at first intended, in order to meet the wants of Nonconformists. He also wrote a work on the history of the Welsh language and its connection with other languages. He died, after a lingering illness, in the year 1783, to the great regret of all his numerous friends.*

In 1770, the whole Bible in quarto, with annotations at the end of each chapter, by the Rev. PETER WILLIAMS, was published at Caermarthen. This was the first Welsh Commentary on the Bible. It is true that John Evans, M.A., had published "A Harmony of the Four Gospels" five years before Peter Williams's Bible, with short notes on the verses, but this consideration does not affect the truth of the more general statement. This was the first time that a Bible was printed *in Wales*. "Peter Williams's Bible" has been a household word in Wales ever since its publication, and is now considered an essential furniture of the house in almost every family in the country. Eight thousand copies were published in the first edition, and they were sold at £1 each, well bound. At least twelve editions have been published at Caermarthen and other towns of Wales since that time. The latest improvements are a folio edition, with plates by Fisher and Co., London, and another by the London Printing and Publishing Company with even more elaborate illustrations. Some of the doctrines bearing upon "The Person of Christ," maintained in the first edition, were condemned by the denomination to which the commentator belonged (the Calvinistic Methodist), and brought upon him a considerable amount of obloquy at the time. But these differences have now been long reconciled, and Mr. Williams, both for the purity of his character, his labours as an evangelist, and notably in connection with the press, for the pre-eminent position he held, as the chief contributor to Welsh religious literature during the eighteenth century, is justly looked upon as one of the best benefactors of his country. The closing words of the preface to his commentary lucidly reflect the simplicity of his character: "I can boldly assert," he says, "that it was love for my nation, the Welsh, and a sincere desire for their salvation, which induced me to write what I have written; I am glad to have had an opportunity thus to cast my mite to the

* Richard's "Life of Dr. Llewellyn," quoted in "Hanes Crefydd yn Nghymru," p. 654.

treasury, and to be of some service for the Gospel in my day and generation."

In 1779, an edition of the New Testament was published, but the number of copies is not known.

We are now approaching the period of the rise of Sunday Schools in Wales, and as we have devoted a subsequent chapter to relate the connection between the Welsh Sunday Schools and the formation of the Bible Society, it may interest the reader, and serve for future reference, to complete here the list of all the editions of the Bible up to the formation of that society.

In 1789, the whole Bible was again issued in folio, for the use of churches. The number of copies was small; expense borne by the Christian Knowledge Society. In 1790, the whole Bible was issued in 12mo, with the marginal references of Mr. John Canne, who was a Baptist minister in Holland. It was printed at Trevecca, under the superintendence of Revs. Peter Williams and David Jones. It was after the publication of this Bible that the rupture between Mr. Williams and his brethren in the matter of the Sabellian heresy of which he was accused, came to a crisis, and which terminated in his being expelled from the Calvinistic Methodist body. The number of copies issued is not known. Another edition of the same Bible was published at Caermarthen.

In 1799, the whole Bible was issued from Oxford, in an edition of ten thousand copies octavo, with the New Testament apart. This was superintended by Rev. J. Roberts, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge undertook the publication, at the earnest solicitations of Rev. T. Jones, curate of Creaton, Northamptonshire.

In 1800, the New Testament was again printed at Oxford; number of copies not known; and the same year ten thousand copies of the New Testament in various sizes were published at Shrewsbury. We have now exhausted the list, up to the formation of the Bible Society, and our further remarks * on this organization will show how the good work of supplying Wales with the Word of Truth has been carried on up to the present time.

* See Chap. XIII.

The following tables will furnish the reader with a short compendium of the most important particulars mentioned in the preceding pages.

WELSH BIBLE.

EDITIONS OF.	WHEN PUBLISHED.	BY WHOSE INSTRUMENTALITY.
1st, folio	1588	Bishop Morgan, of St. Asaph. "He undertook and accomplished the translation of the Scriptures solely from patriotic and religious principle." — <i>Llywelyn's "History of Welsh Bible,"</i> p. 17.
2nd, folio	1620	Bishop Parry, of St. Asaph, aided by Dr. John Davies, of Mallwyd. "Parry was entirely a volunteer in this affair, induced to undertake it merely from a consideration of the absolute wants and necessities of the country. Many, if not most, of the churches were without Bibles, and we may rest assured there were none elsewhere; yet no provision was made or like to be made, but for the voluntary, but for the spontaneous undertaking of this truly Protestant and very venerable bishop.— <i>Llywelyn.</i> "
3rd, 8vo	1630	Rowland Heylin and Sir Thomas Myddleton, two patriotic Welshmen.
4th, 8vo	1654	In the time of the Commonwealth, supposed by Dr. Llywelyn to have originated with Cromwell, who was of Welsh origin. Six thousand copies.
5th, 8vo	1678	Thomas Gouge, a pious and charitable Non-conformist, of London. Eight thousand copies.
6th, 8vo	1690	Stephen Hughes,* a Dissenting minister, patronized by Lord Wharton. Ten thousand copies.
7th, folio	1690	Bishop Lloyd, of St. Asaph (one of the seven bishops). One thousand copies.
8th, 8vo	1718	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Ten thousand copies.
9th, 8vo	1727	Ditto. At the instigation of Griffith Jones, and in consequence of the demand
10th, 8vo	1746	Ditto. } created by his schools. (<i>See "Welsh Piety,"</i> vol. i. pp. 20, 25.) In all
11th, 8vo	1752	Ditto. } thirty thousand copies.†
12th, 8vo	1770	Ditto. At the instigation of Dr. Llywelyn, a Dissenting minister. Twenty thousand copies.

* See page 36.

† Thirty-five thousand.

EDITIONS OF.	WHEN PUBLISHED.	BY WHOSE INSTRUMENTALITY.
13th, 8vo	1789	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. By the Rev. H. Parry and Mr. John Thomas.
14th } 15th } folio 16th }	At the end of this century.	The Rev. Peter Williams, a Methodist clergyman, with notes. In the whole, about twenty thousand copies.
17th, folio	"	Charles, a Methodist clergyman.
18th, folio	"	The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, at the instigation of a Welsh clergyman, the Rev. T. Jones, curate of Creaton, Northamptonshire.
19th, folio	"	The Bible Society, which was formed in consequence of Mr. Jones failing to procure an additional supply from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.*

EDITIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.†

DATE.	PARTICULARS.
1551	The Gospels and Epistles, from the translation of William Salesbury.
1567	The whole of the New Testament. William Salesbury.
1647	The New Testament, 12mo, without the contents of the chapters. One thousand copies.
1654	In larger type. One thousand copies.
1672	With the Psalms in prose and verse. Two thousand copies, 8vo.
1752	With the Psalms. Two thousand copies, 8vo. A reprint of the edition of 1672.
1779	The New Testament only.
1799	An edition printed at Oxford at the same time as that of the whole Bible. Two thousand copies.
1800	Another at Oxford. Number of copies not known.
1800	Ten thousand copies of various sizes printed at Shrewsbury.

Inasmuch as Judge Johnes and the "Gwyddoniadur" do not agree in several particulars respecting the editions of the Bible after 1789, we shall here insert the list as given by the latter authority, and which seems on the whole more consistent.

* Given in Johnes's "Essay," p. 101.

† Culled from the "Gwyddoniadur," Art. "Beibl."

EDITIONS OF THE BIBLE FROM 1789 ("GWYDDONIADUR").

DATE.	PARTICULARS.
1789	The Bible, folio, London. For the use of the churches. By the S. P. C. K.
1770-1800	The Bible, 4to, with annotations on every chapter, by Peter Williams, Caermarthen. Several editions.
1790	The Bible, 12mo, with marginal references by John Canne.
1799	The Bible, 8vo, ten thousand copies, Oxford, by the same society, and under the care of Rev. J. Roberts.

Judge Johnes has, apparently, fallen into a few slight errors in his enumeration of the editions of the Bible. That of 1789 he describes as octavo when it ought to have been folio—the edition intended for the churches. The three editions of Peter Williams he calls folio; they were quarto; and with regard to his seventeenth number, there is no account of Mr. Charles having been directly instrumental in procuring any edition before those he prepared for the Bible Society.

Drawing a few general conclusions from the above lists and statistics, and supplying the deficiency in the account by assigning a very moderate average for the editions in which the exact number of copies is not known, we find that about 156,000 copies of the whole Bible and New Testament were distributed in the country during the 250 years preceding the formation of the Bible Society, or prior to the year 1800, for no edition appeared after that date until the first issued by this society. Again, dividing this period into two unequal portions of 150 and 100 years, we find that in the eighteenth century, or the 100 years immediately preceding the formation of the society, 116,000 copies were distributed; and in the 150 years before that, 40,000. Dividing the 150 and the 100 years into periods of twenty-five years each, and assuming the average population of Wales during the 150 years to be 350,000, and during the 100 years, 400,000, it is found that one Bible or Testament was distributed amongst every fifty of the population every twenty-five years, during the 150 years after the first issue of the gospels and epistles by William Salesbury, in 1551; whilst during the 100 years after, one copy for every fourteen of the population is the average. We may further add that this estimate of the population is no imaginary assumption, but has been deduced from the actual

numbers fixed by statisticians for different periods prior to the first actual census made in 1801.* During the first fifty years of the existence of the Bible Society, it is true that the country was supplied with about 1,000,000 copies of Bibles and Testaments through the various agencies at work ; or one for every two of the population every twenty-five years, and a copy for *each* man, woman, and child in fifty years ; but the proportion supplied during the two former periods specified, is by no means contemptible, which plainly shows that the country was neither entirely neglected at that time, nor always sunk into that state of ignorance and superstition too often taken for granted to be the case. These various editions were not pressed upon the country against its will, but in every instance were sought as bread by the hungry, and very often a large edition of twenty thousand copies would be disposed of as readily as one of eight or ten thousand. There could not be this eagerness for the supply apart from an ability to peruse them, which clearly proves that there must have been some other agency at work teaching the people to read the Divine word, and to understand its doctrines. The consideration of this subject will occupy our attention in a subsequent chapter, but before dismissing this branch of our inquiry, it is worthy of note that whilst the high honour of having translated the sacred volume into the Welsh tongue belongs to the clergy of the Church of England, the zeal manifested in reproducing and circulating it, has been the common characteristic of every denomination and party alike.

LITERARY NOTES ON THE FIRST COPIES OF THE WELSH VERSIONS OF SCRIPTURES.

Having made a personal inspection of some of the earliest copies of the Welsh Testament and Bible in the library of the British Museum, it is thought the following gleanings will not be uninteresting to the reader.

William Salesbury's Testament of 1567, is in quarto size, and the copy is complete. It seems to have originally belonged to a Mr. Matthew Skinner, sergeant-at-law, whose crest is on the cover, bearing date 1735. Then it came to the possession of Mr. Richard Morris, of the Navy Office, who has his name written on the top of title-page thus, *Llyfr Rhisiart Morus ōr Nafi Offis, Llundain, 1761.*

* See "The National Cyclopædia," Art. "Census."

On the title-page, which is a little ornamented, is a square woodcut with the verse from John iii. c, all round the top, "And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." Under it is a reference to Matthew xiii. f, with a Welsh stanza exhorting to sell all and buy the pearl of great price. The letters c and f after the chapters refer to the page of the chapter in which the verse is found; thus c is the third page, and the verse in the present division is the nineteenth; so f is page six and the verse forty-four. From 2nd Timothy it is divided into verses, but not before; hence the page references.

There are different views respecting the meaning of the woodcut. Some take it to illustrate Matthew xiii. 44, and that it represents people buying and selling. It looks more likely to illustrate John iii. 19, for a very narrow part of the picture is light, but the greater proportion dark, and only a few transacting business in the former, while the dark field is full.

In Dr. Morgan's Bible of 1588, the title-page is wanting, also two leaves of calendar and one leaf of errata. On leaf seventy-three is written the name of a former owner, thus: *David Xichols*, his book, etc., 1713.

The title-page of Dr. Morgan's Bible can, however, be seen in a copy of Dr. Llewellyn's history of Welsh versions, by G. Ofor, London. It is worth while calling attention to this interesting copy, as it is the only one of its kind. The full title is, "An Historical Account of the British or Welsh Versions and Editions of the Bible, etc. MS. notes by G. Ofor.—Note. Interleaved with cuttings from Newspapers (catalogues, is meant), facsimiles, etc., with specimen of the ornaments and typography in the first portion of Sacred Scriptures in the Welsh Language."

Dr. Llewellyn, on page seven, says that 2nd Epistle to Timothy was translated by Dr. Davies. In this he is evidently wrong, though now followed by many; he no doubt intended 1st Epistle to Timothy. So Ofor is wrong when he says on margin of his copy that the Testament is divided into verses from 1st Timothy. It should be from 2nd. The catalogue of the Museum is further still at fault, when it says that the Testament is *not at all* divided into verses. Opposite page six, the interleaved notes say that it was printed at Frankfort, Cologne, or some city on the Rhine. How is this to be reconciled with the copy's own statement, "Imprynted at London"?

Dr. Parry's folio Bible of 1620, and which can be looked upon as the authorized version, still looks quite new. It is a splendid copy, highly ornamental, and preserved in very strong and handsome binding.

The excerpts from different catalogues pasted on Offor's copy of Dr. Llewellyn's book, state that the Duke of Sussex's copy of Dr. Morgan's Bible was sold for £59, and a copy of Salesbury's Testament was offered, in 1853, for £21.

The copy of Dr. Morgan's Bible in the library of the Dean and Chapter at Westminster, which was presented by the translator himself, is in excellent preservation. There is another copy in the collection of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London.

The following extract from Mr. Offor's remarks in Dr. Llewellyn's book is interesting, as showing what glaring errors some English authors have from time to time propagated with regard to Welsh subjects. It is found opposite page seven :

“FIRST EDITION OF NEW TESTAMENT IN WELSH.

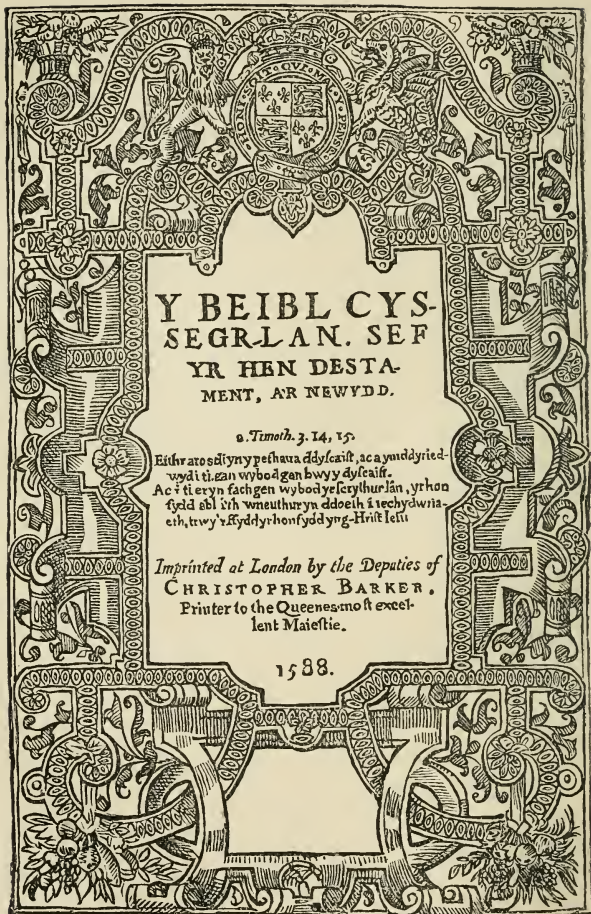
“Few books have been so much neglected, and perhaps none so ill-treated as this handsome and very interesting volume. The epistle to the reader has never been published in English; it is long and may contain some curious information. The dedication to Elizabeth is reprinted in the appendix to this book; the original is on two leaves, and on carefully collating it with this reprint, I have corrected one hundred and forty-eight errors. Mr. Herbert, in the ‘Typographical Antiquities,’ vol. ii. p. 934, gives a description of the book and copy of the title in eight lines, and in these eight lines has made sixteen errors.”

Mr. Watson, in the “History of English Poetry,” revised by Ritson, Ashby, Douce, Park, and other eminent antiquaries, or by the editor in 1824, has in every edition published a slanderous and most unfounded reflection upon the translator; this, although not connected with poetry, has a place in the index and has been copied by Herbert :—

“I cannot help mentioning in this place a pleasant mistake of Bishop Morgan, in his translation of the New Testament into Welsh, printed 1567. He translates the vials of *wrath* in the Revelations by *Crythau*, i.e. *clouds*, or fiddles, Rev. v. 8. The Greek is *φαιλαι*.

Now it is probable the bishop translated only from the English, where he found *vials* which he took for *viols*." It is very singular that a work which displays indefatigable research, written by a D.D. and revised by so many eminent antiquaries, should have published a mis-statement so palpable. Rev. v. 8 does not refer to vials of *wrath*; the words are "golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints;" this the learned bishop renders—"a phiolæ aur yn llawn o arogley, y rhein ydynt gweddïe'r saint." The word vial or vials occurs twelve times in the Book of Revelation, and in no other part of the New Testament. The pious translator uniformly translates it "phiol."

To this it might be added that it is quite incomprehensible why such flagrant falsehoods should have been ever uttered. What a number of blunders have been collected into so small a space! Mr. Offor has pointed out some. To these must be added, that Bishop Morgan did not translate the Book of Revelation, but Thomas Huet, Chancellor of St. David's. Besides, we find here the since oft-repeated assumption broached, perhaps for the first time, that the Welsh version is only a translation of the English. Dr. Watson must evidently have been drawing upon his imagination for every particular in the extract.



FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE TO DR. MORGAN'S BIBLE.

(Reduced from folio, taken from an interleaved copy of Dr. Llewellyn's Welsh Versions, by G. Offor.—British Museum.)

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS—SPREAD OF GENERAL LITERATURE.

This epoch almost coincident with the third period of Welsh literature—Limits of the four periods—A brief survey of the first two—Thierry's estimate of the literary qualities of the Welsh during the first two periods—A more general survey of the third period—The first book *printed* in the Welsh language—Others from the pen of William Salesbury—Fuller's remarks on Salesbury's English-Welsh Dictionary—Works by Griffith Roberts—The Grammars of the period—Edmund Prys and his Metrical Version of the Psalms—Dr. Davies of Mallwyd and his Grammar and Dictionaries of the language in Latin—Rhys Prichard and "The Candle of the Welsh"—The works of Morgan Llwyd of Wrexham—"The History of the Faith," by Charles Edwards—Books produced during the years 1666-1784—Henry Richard's estimate of the intelligence of the people during the third period—General characteristics of the fourth period up to the present time.

THE time comprised within the above limits very nearly coincides with what is generally described as the *third* period of the history of Welsh literature. The first is described as extending from the earliest times to the Norman conquest in 1066; the second, from that period to the Reformation; the third from the Reformation to the commencement of the reign of George III. in 1760, within about twenty-four years to the establishment of Sunday Schools, and the fourth from 1760 to the present time.

A very brief survey of the periods immediately preceding that in which we are now more particularly interested, will show that the Welsh were always a nation to which literature presented peculiar charms. The Welsh *Triads*, and *Mabinogion*, though published in a connected form during the second period, constituted,

as it were, the unwritten lore of the people from time immemorial. The former are maxims in triplets, each setting forth a historical event, or a moral principle, of which there are extant several hundreds; the latter are tales of heroes, some real and some imaginary, intended to be repeated at the fireside, to while away the time of young chieftains. The earliest manuscripts extant belong to the sixth century; it is not improbable that many belonging to an earlier date were wantonly destroyed in the manner described in the preceding chapter. In the year 1801, the most valuable of the Welsh manuscripts were collected from the libraries of colleges or of private individuals, by Mr. Owen Jones, a furrier of London, and published in three vols. octavo, at great expense, under the title of "The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales." The work was called Myvyrian after Mr. Jones's native place, who also called himself Owain Myvyr. He was assisted by two eminent Welsh scholars, Dr. W. Owen Pughe and Edward Williams.

The earliest Welsh poet whose work is now extant, was Aneurin, who is supposed to have flourished between 510 and 560 A.D. His work is called "Gododin," and is a poem describing the adventures of the *Ottadini*, a tribe of the Cymry, before their immigration from Cumberland to Wales, where they afterwards settled. The next in point of time were Taliesin Benbeirdd (The Prince of Bards), from 520-570; Llywarch Hen, or Llywarch the old, from 550-640; Myrddin Wyllt (Merlin the wild), from 530-600; Gwyddno, Gwilym ab Don, and Golyddan, author of *Arymes Prydyn Vawr* (the great armed confederacy of Britain), in which all the nations having a common cause with the Britons are invoked to assemble together to resist the encroachments of the Saxons.

The prose compositions of the earliest period, still extant, are the "Laws of Hywel Dda" (King Howel the good), who died in 748, after a reign of forty years; and the proverbs of Catwg Ddoeth (Catog the wise), who flourished in the sixth century. King Howel's laws were published in Wotton's "Leges Wallicæ," in 1830, in the preparation of which Rev. Moses Williams Defynog assisted the compiler; and in 1841, by the Record Commission.

The Myvyrian Archaiology contains the compositions of no less than fifty-nine poets, of the second period, who all, indeed, flourished between 1120 and 1380. The most eminent of them are Llywarch ab Llewellyn and Cynddelw Brydydd mawr (the great

poet); but the best known in later times is Davydd ab Gwilym, called the Cambrian Petrarch, because he composed no less than seven score and seven poems to Morfudd, a lady of high rank, to whom he was attached. It is generally remarked that his style has a great resemblance to that of the Scottish poet Burns.

The most eminent prose writers of the second period were Caradoc of Llancarvan, a monkish chronicler, who wrote the history of Wales from the year 1089, to his own death in 1156, afterwards continued to 1196; and Griffith ab Arthur, commonly called Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was archdeacon of Monmouth, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, the author of "*Historia Britonum*," which has been a rich supply for many subsequent works of fiction. The general devotion of the Welsh people to literature during these two periods cannot be better expressed than in the words of the French historian:—

"The ancient Britons lived and breathed in poetry: the expression may seem extravagant, but it is not so in reality, for in their political maxims, preserved to our own times, they place the poet musician beside the agriculturist and the artist, as one of the three pillars of national existence (*Trioedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain*). Their poets had but one theme: the destiny of their country, its misfortunes, and its hopes. The nation, a poet in its turn, caught up and adopted their fictions with earnest enthusiasm, giving the wildest construction to their simplest expressions; that which in the bard was merely a patriotic wish, became to the excited imagination of the hearers a national promise; his expectations were for them prophecies; his very silence was a confirmation of their dreamiest speculations."*

With this brief *resumé*, as an introduction, we intend to enter at greater length upon the history of the productions of the THIRD PERIOD, which we have marked out as our special field. Three influences were evidently at work from the commencement of this period, but gaining strength with the lapse of years, in changing and nourishing the national taste. These were the Reformation, the discovery of the art of printing, and the incorporation of Wales with England by an Act of Henry VIII., in 1536, through which the people acquiesced in their political amalgamation with the greater country. As a natural consequence, we find the *Awen* of

* Thierry's "*Norman Conquest*," vol. i. p. 53 (Bohn's).

the bards becoming comparatively dormant during this third period, to break forth with a greater energy and in a sublimer strain in the fourth, having no doubt profited from the more comprehensive training afforded to the poets by the superior literature of the post-Reformation period. It is not our intention, however, to deal exhaustively with the subject, judging it more in harmony with the object we have in view, to confine ourselves to those works which carried the most direct influence in moulding the character of the people. Those, however, who wish to pursue this subject more minutely, will find every assistance in a work of immense labour, entitled, "Cambrian Bibliography,"* in which is given an account of the books printed in the Welsh language, or relating to Wales, from the year 1546 to the end of the eighteenth century, with biographical notices, by the Rev. William Rowlands (Gwilym Lley'n), edited and enlarged by the Rev. D. Silvan Evans, B.D., rector of "Llan yn Mowddwy," Merioneth. A continuation of this work is in course of preparation by the Cymmrodorion Society, London.

As a matter of curiosity, it may be interesting to record, that the first book printed in the Welsh language, was a kind of small almanac, but very different in character from books of the same class in the present day. The title-page reads thus:—"Bible. In this Book is treated Welsh Science—Calendar—The Creed or Points of the Catholic Faith—The *Paternoster*, or Lord's Prayer—The Ten Commandments—The Seven Virtues of the Church—The Games in use,† etc. 4to. London, 1546." William Salesbury seems to have been the author of the work, but Sir John Price, of The Priory, Brecon, had a share in its production, as well as the sole charge of the printing. The word "Bible," in large characters, was put as the heading of its first page, in order to draw attention, because the Bible was then very strange to Wales, and because it contained the portions of Scripture mentioned in the title-page. The next year, the same author published an English-Welsh Dictionary, dedicated by permission to King Henry VIII. On the title-page of this work, it is stated that it was "Imprynted at

* "Llyfryddiaeth y Cymry."

† The Welsh expression is, *Y Kampay arveradwy*. Silvan Evans, differing from Rowlands, maintains that it means, virtues to be practised, like *Gweddïau gocheladwy* in same Bible, meaning prayers for deliverance.

London in Foster Lane by me John Waley, 1547, *cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum*." The quaint Thomas Fuller, in his "Worthies," has made a lengthy reference to this book and its author. In his characteristic, pithy and humorous style he says:—

"This gentleman, out of love to his native language, *amor patriæ ratione valentior omni* (love of country is stronger than any argument), composed a short English and Welsh dictionary, first privately presented to and approved by King Henry the Eighth (being a Tuthar (*Tudor*) by his father's side of Welch extraction), and then publicly printed, Anno Domini 1547. Some captious spirits will quarrel the usefulness thereof, seeing the Welch did not *want*, and the English did not *wish*, a book of that nature. But let them know that it is useful for both nations; to the English for *attaining*, to the Welch for *retaining*, that language. *Attaining*. For, being an original tongue, an antiquary is lame without it (which I find by my own defect) to understand the (few of many) remaining monuments of that nation. *Retaining*. That tongue, as well as others, by disuse being subject not only to corruption but oblivion, by the confession of the natives of that country. Indeed, all dictionaries of languages are very useful: words bringing matter to the tongue, and, as Plato well observed, ὄνομα ἔστι ὄργανον διδασκαλικόν (a name or a word is an instrument of instruction), and ushereth knowledge into our understanding. However, seeing nothing can be begun and finished at once, Salesbury's book (as the first of this kind) did rather essay than effect the work, and since then hath been completed by others."*

In the year 1550, another work emanated from the same pen, entitled, "The overthrow of the Pope's High Altar, 8vo, London," and also "An easy and plain Introduction to the Welsh Language," a second and revised edition of which appeared in 1567. In the year 1551, Salesbury also published "As many passages from Scriptures as were read in churches at Communion time, on Sundays and Feast Days throughout the year." This contained a translation of the portions of the gospels and epistles which were used in the service of the church. The same year was composed his "Rhetoric, or the Expounder of Wit." This was left after him in manuscript, and at the request of his relative, John Salesbury, of

* Fuller's "Worthies of England" (Nuttall), vol. iii. p. 533. First published in 1662.

Lleweni, was revised and enlarged by the Rev. H. Perri B.D. It was an excellent treatise, and was published as a quarto volume in London. These books were all issued before the New Testament was translated, and were no unworthy harbingers of the greater boon which the indefatigable author had in store for his fellow-countrymen. He received much support from Sir William Herbert, just created Earl of Pembroke, and Sir John Price. It should be remembered that the people generally were bound in the fetters of Popery, and the Protestant zeal of Salesbury led him to judge rightly that their enfranchisement could only be effected by enlightening their intellect. During the dark days of Queen Mary, his efforts in this direction were entirely suspended, so far as they could be shown by any outward manifestation. But no doubt he was qualifying himself in the interval for the crowning point of all his efforts—the publication of his New Testament in 1567.

It is an ominous fact that the first books printed in the Welsh language were of a useful and religious character. In this they differ entirely from the earliest production of the press on English soil, which was “The Game and Playe of the Chesse.” Who knows but the nation is indebted for its present undoubted religious literary taste to the high religious tone infused into the first-fruits of the vernacular press by one of the country’s best benefactors, William Salesbury?

In the year 1567, a “Grammar of the Welsh Language” was published at Milan, in Italy, by Dr. Griffith Roberts. Very little is known of the author, except that he was brought up in a college at Sienna, in Italy, through the liberality of Sir William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and lord of Cardiff, to whom he dedicates his work. This grammar is still extant, and shows that the author was thoroughly conversant with the Welsh language, and able to reduce the study of it to a complete and well-digested system. It is the first grammar of the language.*

In the year 1584, there was published by the same author a religious book, called “Y Drych Cristianogol” (The Christian Mirror), “in which,” as is further stated in the title page, “a man may perceive the root and beginning of every spiritual good.” This was printed at Rouen, on the Seine, in France, and it is a curious

* The Traethodydd for January, 1872, “Hen Lyfrau y Cymry,” by Rev. John Peters (Ioan Pedr), Bala.

fact that two books intended for the Welsh people should have been printed on the Continent. The publisher of the latter was Mr. Roger Smyth, of the town of St. Asaph, near the town of Denbigh; but how he came to dwell at Rouen is, and as it seems probable, must remain, a mystery. Both the author and the publisher have written very interesting letters to the Welsh people to introduce the book. The former proves himself an interesting writer, as well as an accurate grammarian, and above all, he had much at heart the spiritual welfare of his countrymen.* About this time, also, several Latin and English works from the pen of a Welshman, Dr. Humphrey Lloyd, of Denbigh, a noted antiquary, and Member of Parliament for Oxford, were published. He translated into English "The History of Wales, by Caradoc of Llan-carvan," already mentioned as a work of the second period; and Dr. David Powell, of Rhiwabon, himself also an antiquarian, in the year 1584, published it, with explanatory notes of his own. This seems to have been an age of grammars. In the year 1592, a "Grammar of the Welsh language, and of the Principles of Accentuation," was published in London in a folio volume, by Dr. John David Rhys, who, like Dr. Griffith Roberts, after finishing a course of study in Oxford, went to the University of Sienna, in Italy, to study medicine. He was so conversant with the Italian tongue that he was elected president of the school of Pistria, in Tuscany, and left behind him a treatise on the orthography and pronunciation of that language. His work on the Welsh language is a lasting monument of his wonderful talent and unsparing labour. The title is "*Cambrobrytannicæ Cymræcaeve Linguae Institutiones et Rudimenta.*" The next year, 1593, Captain William Myddleton (Gwilym Canoldref), a commander in Queen Elizabeth's navy, and an able poet, published a grammar and an explanation of Welsh metre and poetry. Soon after, he undertook a strange work for a naval commander, rocked in the cradle of the deep, often engaged in hot skirmishes with the Spaniards, and interrupted by the noisy duties of a seafaring life, viz. the turning of the Psalms of David into Welsh metre. He chose also the straitest of the Muse's shackles—what is known as the *pedwar-mesur ar-hugain* (the twenty-four metres). In a note† appended to the last psalm, he

* Traethodydd, January, 1872, *Ibid.*

† The note is in Latin, and reads, "Apud Scutum Insulam Occidentalium

says that he finished the work on the 24th of January, 1595, off an island in the West Indies. The book was published in 1603, and a reprint issued in 1827. Though much esteemed as a linguistic monument, it never came into general use, and that chiefly, no doubt, because the metres he chose were not adapted for congregational singing. In the year 1593, Morris Kyffin translated the "Defence of the Church of England," by Bishop Jewel, which may be reckoned as the last issue of the sixteenth century. Though the principles of the Reformation were only just beginning to be generally recognized in Wales during the last thirty years of the century, a great deal was accomplished in that short time, especially in connection with the translation of Scriptures; and the fact that as many as fifteen works were printed in the language during this short interval, shows that the intellectual activity of the country was beginning to be effectually awakened.

Another metrical version of the Psalms appeared in the early part of the seventeenth century, which, for many simple reasons, was destined to become more widely used than that of Captain William Myddleton. In fact it became very soon, and has so continued unto this day, the best known work in the language. The author of this was

REV. EDMUND PRYS.

This able poet and linguist was born at a farm called Gerddi bluog, in the parish of Llandecwyn, in the county of Merioneth, in the year 1541. He was educated at Cambridge, where he graduated M.A., and having received priest's orders, was appointed to the living of Festiniog, with which Maentwrog is joined. In the year 1576, he became also the archdeacon of Merioneth. It is said that he was conversant with eight languages. He deserves a respected memory for the assistance he rendered Dr. Morgan in the translation of the Old Testament, very probably taking up the psalms; but the nation is under a greater obligation to him for the excellent metrical version with which his name is inseparably connected. He had several advantages over his competitor, Myddleton. Living amidst the wilds of Merioneth, everything was favourable for meditation and worship. The metre he chose, too, was far more simple,

Indorum finitum erat hoc opus vicesimo Januario quarto Anno salutis nostræ, 1595."

probably an invention of his own, and is now known by the name of *Mesur Salm* (psalm metre). It is said that he was accustomed to prepare a psalm against every Sunday until he went through the whole book, and that thus every one had been publicly sung before being published for the benefit of the country generally. There are evident marks throughout of the author's acquaintance with the original Hebrew, and although most of his stanzas are patterns of smooth and expressive rhythm, some, from his too great anxiety to adhere to the text, are somewhat stiff and unmelodious. He composed some scores of "odes" on different subjects, but many of these are unworthy of such an illustrious parentage, being mere literary squabbles between him and a neighbouring bard of the name of William Cynwal. He died about the year 1624, in the eighty-third year of his age, and was buried in the churchyard of Maentwrog, with no indication to mark his final resting-place. His motto was, "*Môr anwyl yw Meirionydd*" (How dear is Merioneth). The first publication of his metrical version was in connection with the popular edition of the Bible in 1630. It afterwards appeared as a separate volume in 1648, but the most usual form has always been as an appendix to the Bible.

Another author of this period, whose fame has long outlived his own immediate days, because he served his country well, both by the part he took in the translation of the Scriptures and by enriching its literature generally, was

DR. JOHN DAVIES OF MALLWYD.

He was the son of Davydd ab Sion ab Rhys, a weaver by trade, and was born in the parish of Llanferras, Denbighshire, about the year 1570. Weaving was held in higher reputation in those days than it is now, and his father may have been in pretty good circumstances, a surmise which is confirmed by the fact of the son having received a liberal education from his youth. His biographers do not agree as to the time he entered a grammar school, though they all agree as to the place—Ruthin. The "*Cambrian Plutarch*" maintains it was at Dr. Gabriel Goodman's school, but another authority, "*Enwogion Cymru*" (The worthies of Wales), proves that to have been impossible; for Dr. Davies had completed his academical course at Jesus College, Oxford, and had returned to his own country, in 1592, three years before Dr. Goodman established the school which

is called after his name. The "Cambrian Plutarch" also asserts that his tutor at Ruthin was Dr. Richard Parry, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph. To reconcile these statements it is supposed that Dr. Parry may have opened a private school at Ruthin, near his home, and that thus the intimacy arose between them which lasted through all their lifetime. They married two sisters, and later on many preferments came to Davies' lot, apparently through the bishop's influence. Before Dr. Parry's elevation to the see of St. Asaph, he had been presented by the Crown to the living of Mallwyd, Merioneth, though this was ten years after he had first taken his priest's ordination; but after this, his honours fell heavily, though not fast, upon him. In 1608, he returned for some time, it is not known how long, to Lincoln College, Oxford. After his next settlement in Wales, he was made Canon of St. Asaph in 1612, and the following years he obtained the livings of Llanymawddwy, Darowain, Llanfair, and Llannefydd, which placed him in affluent circumstances. In the year 1616, he received his diploma of S.T.P. from Lincoln College.

The works with which his name is now chiefly associated are a "Grammar of the Welsh Language," in Latin, published in 1621, a work of standard value, and a "Welsh and Latin Dictionary," published in 1632, which was the great undertaking of his life. A gentleman of the name of Thomas ab William, or Sir Thomas Williams, a physician of Trefriw, near Llanrwst, had left behind him in manuscript a Latin and Welsh Dictionary. Dr. Davis undertook to revise and enlarge this, adding to it a counterpart from Welsh to Latin. This work occupied the leisure hours of nearly forty years of his life. Inasmuch as the great bulk of the theological works of that time were written in Latin, this Dictionary proved a great boon to the preachers of the Principality for many years after. He also translated into Welsh "The Thirty-nine Articles" of the Church of England, and Parson's "Christian Exercises." He left behind him a manuscript volume of 800 pages, containing odes, songs and stanzas, copied with marginal notes of his own from some rare works, and which after his death was published by Iago ab Dewi of Pencadair.

There is no doubt that he had some share in Dr. Morgan and Dr. Parry's editions of the Bible—less, possibly, in the former than the latter. In his preface to the Welsh grammar which was dedicated

to Dr. Parry, he says that "he spent much time, for more than thirty years, to study the language of his country, and that he had a hand in the translation of the two editions of the Bible into it." He was an indefatigable worker, to whom literary labour seems to have been a delight. With regard to the preparation of his Grammar and Dictionary, he further remarks, "I used to return from this light labour (as he looked upon it) with greater zeal and redoubled attention and diligence to my other important duties, of preaching the gospel and translating the Scriptures into Welsh."

He died in 1644, at the age of seventy-four, and was buried in the chancel of Mallwyd church. A Latin inscription to the following effect, was placed over his grave: "John Davis, S.T.P., Rector of the Parish Church of Mallwyd, who died on the 15th day of May, and was buried on the 19th, A.D. 1644, more to commemorate his virtues than his name." This latter phrase refers to his general character, for he was remarkable for his kind disposition, his public benefactions, and his alms to the poor.

In the year 1630, "The Practice of Piety, directing a Christian how to walk that he may please God," was translated into Welsh by Mr. Rowland Vychan of Caergai, near Bala, and published in London. The translator was a sheriff of Merioneth, in 1644. The author of this treatise was born at Caermarthen, and educated at Exeter College, Oxford. He was made Bishop of Bangor on the death of Dr. Rowland in 1616. His book was so popular with the English that by the year 1734 it had reached its fifty-ninth edition. It soon reached in Wales, too, a number of editions far above the average books of the period, under the title of "Llyfr Yr Ymarfer o Dduwioledeb." The publication of the first edition was undertaken at the expense of Alderman Heylin, who, as already mentioned, was the chief mover in securing for his country what has been very properly called, the first People's Bible. Mr. Vychan translated two other books from the English, viz. "A Handbook of Prayer," and "A Defence from the Plague of Schism."

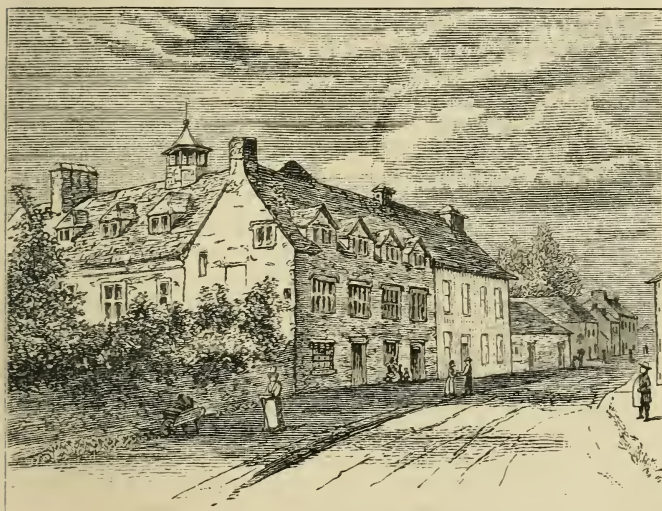
The book, however, which next to the Bible was the most popular with the Welsh, and which next to it exerted the greatest influence in forming their morals, was "Canwyll y Cymry" (The Candle of the Welsh), by

THE REV. RHYS PRICHARD.

No one who takes any interest in Welsh literature, or in the social and intellectual progress of the people, ought to be ignorant of its illustrious author. Rhys Prichard was born in the town of Llandovery, Caermarthenshire, in the year 1579, which was the thirty-first year of the reign of Elizabeth. He was descended from a respectable and rich family in the neighbourhood. His father's name, according to the old Welsh style of surnaming, was Dafydd ap Rhisiart ap Dafydd ap Rhys ap Dafydd. There is not much to be reported of the son in his younger days, but the tradition that he was addicted to intemperate habits. In this he followed the example of low companions, but was turned from his evil ways through the instrumentality of a he-goat. The goat, it is said, was accustomed to follow him wherever he went, and so, used to accompany him to the public houses. Once he or his irregular associates gave the goat some ale to drink until it was intoxicated, but after that event he could never induce the goat to follow him to the tavern or to taste a drop of the intoxicating drink. Noticing the temperate habits of the goat, says the story, its owner was convinced of his own lawlessness; and this conviction was so far intensified that he not only renounced his reprobate habits, and forsook his companions, but also consecrated himself to the services of his Lord, as a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Having been brought up at Oxford, he was ordained priest with a view to the curacy of Wiltham, or Wytham, in Essex, 25th April, 1602. On the 6th of August following, he was appointed by Dr. Anthony Rudd, Bishop of St. David's, to the vicarage of Llandingad, connected with which is the parochial chapel of Llanfair-ar-y-bryn. Llandovery is a town in the parish of Llandingad, from which he came to be generally known as "The Vicar of Llandovery." Thus Mr. Prichard was inducted into his native parish, and to the midst of his own property. In 1613, he was chosen a chaplain to Robert, Earl of Essex, who was a nephew to Sir George Devereux, Llwyn-y-brain, near Llandovery; and as this peer's chaplain he was enabled to receive the rectorship of Llanedi, Caermarthenshire, which was given him by King James I. In 1614, he was presented to a prebend in the collegiate church of Brecon. In 1626, he was made also a chancellor of St. David's, with which office the rectory of Llan-

hauaden is joined. We find that Mr. Prichard was favoured with considerable rations of church livings and preferments, and this while he was still young. He was friendly with many gentlemen of note and position, and rich himself; but it is certain he never flattered to the great for the sake of promotion, though his influential friends most probably exerted their power in his favour. It is natural to conclude that it was impossible for one of Mr. Prichard's talents not to draw the attention of his ecclesiastical superiors, as there were at that time but few clergymen in Wales possessing



Y NEUADD, LLANDOVERY, FORMERLY THE RESIDENCE OF VICAR PRICHARD.

suitable ministerial qualifications, as regards piety, learning, or genius.

Tradition describes the Vicar as of a short, well-built bodily frame, and that he wore a moustache, with a long flowing beard, according to the fashion of the ancient druids. His voice was very melodious, and his countenance full of vivacity when in the pulpit.

He delivered his sermons in a fiery and convincing style, showing that his spirit was full of zeal for the eternal welfare of his hearers. But notwithstanding his powerful and praiseworthy ministrations, it appears that his exertions were ineffectual to reform and save the inhabitants of his native town. In one of his songs he proclaims "Mene tecel" above the town of Llandoverly. In Llanedi, however, his ministry was more acceptable and successful. When the Vicar came there, he always drew together large congregations, and often would he be compelled to withdraw to the graveyard to preach, because the church was too small to contain the multitudes who flocked to hear him. It was the same also in the cathedral church of St. David's; no preacher who came there approached him in popularity. Many strangers from great distances attended there, until the large church became too small, and it was necessary to furnish him with a movable pulpit in the churchyard.

But his popularity was an eye-sore to some jealous people, and his pungent sermons intolerable to worldly-wise hearers. They found in him too much of what was described in later times, *Metho-distical*; and they took advantage of the fact that he thus preached in graveyards, to complain against him in the Ecclesiastical Court.

In one of his songs or cantos he refers to this under the heading "A prayer in great straits." They endeavoured to fetter, if not entirely to stop, his much-needed ministry. In this they were happily disappointed, for we find him next writing another song called, "Thanksgiving for a deliverance from the hands of enemies."

Not long after his appointment to the vicarage of Llandingad, or Llandoverly, Mr. Prichard married. The issue of this was one son, called Samuel. He hoped great things from Samuel, and wrote much in song by way of teaching and affectionately warning him. His future, however, turned out sad and disastrous. He became friendly with a magnate of a neighbouring district, Sir Francis Lloyd, Maesfelin, near Llanpeter pont Stephen, who wholly gave himself up to the direst corruptions of his age. In a drunken scuffle with this gentleman, arising, it is said, from jealousy in love, Samuel Prichard was suffocated between two feather beds, and his body thrown into the river Tywi, in such a way as to lead his friends to believe that he had fallen there from his horse in returning home, and so drowned. This also is commemorated in one of his pieces.

Nothing has been recorded respecting the Vicar's last days ; but his death is said to have taken place about the end of the year 1644, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. He was buried in the church of Llandinagad. Neither monument nor stone marks the place of his rest, possibly because it is thought that his "Canwyll y Cymry" is sufficiently noted to immortalize his name.

Mr. Prichard, in his last will, left eleven fields near the church of Llandinagad towards building and supporting a free school at Llandovery. But after four masters had successively superintended the school, and received the rent of the land, the charity was suspended by Mr. Thomas Mainwaring, son of Roger Mainwaring, formerly Bishop of St. David's, who had married Elizabeth, the only daughter of Samuel, the Vicar's son. This Mainwaring took possession of the land, under the excuse that he would pay the schoolmasters in money, which he did for a year or two, and then withheld all, so that a school was no longer held there. Ere long a large flood in the river Tywi, which ran close by, swept away the school building, so that not a vestige of it was left.

It appears that Mr. Prichard was impelled to become a poet more by Christian zeal than poetic inspiration. Commiserating the ignorance and corrupt state of the people, he began to think what more he could do to instruct and improve them. He knew that but few could attend at his own church, and he had an aspiration to influence the whole nation. In most parishes the people cared not to hear sermons, and even his own hearers soon forgot his remarks and lived at variance with his counsels. In his meditations, his attention was arrested by the thought that the Welsh were noted for their partiality to ballads and ballad singing. "Very well," said the pious Vicar, "that shall be my plan ; I will give them religious instruction through the medium of songs." As George Herbert noticed in his days :—

" A verse may find him, who a sermon flies,
And turn delight into a sacrifice."

This was the origin of "Canwyll y Cymry." He searched for the simplest metre and plainest words possible, in order to meet the intelligence of the masses. He had observed that they made hardly any use of the excellent metrical version of the Psalms by Captain William Myddleton (or Gwilym Canoldref), published by

Mr. Thomas Salesbury, already referred to, because of its somewhat ingenious alliterations, and therefore he did not hesitate to make use of the commonest word, or a comparatively vulgar expression, if thereby he could better arrest the attention of his readers. In this he wonderfully succeeded. By the year 1766, it had reached its thirteenth edition. The publisher of that edition, writing about the good effects of the book, says, "It has been the most effectual means (except the Holy Bible itself) to bring many to the right way, and to forsake their sins and transgressions." Often would the devotional patriarch of his family, on long winter evenings, read "The Complaint and Counsel of Dives," so as to produce weeping and impressive sobbing all around. In church gatherings or "experience societies," as they were called, it was not uncommon to hear several, in reporting their religious progress, mentioning some portion of the Vicar's book, as having clung to their thoughts. Poor old women in going about to beg would introduce themselves with the pieces of the book which best suited their case, and if refused, they drew from the same store, the woe it contains upon the miser and merciless.

Dark and dismal in the extreme was the state of the country when this candle began to exert its beneficial influence. From references throughout the book, we find that the clergy almost universally neglected their duty. Most not only could not preach, but could not even read with fluency. Injustice and oppression almost crushed the people. Law Courts had become proverbially venal. Sabbath breaking was rampant, as it could hardly be otherwise, since in 1617, James I., and in 1633, Charles I., ordered "The Book of Sports" to be read in churches after the service. Drunkenness and all its attendant sins pervaded all classes—gentry, clergy, and commonalty. Superstition was the order of the day; conjurers were held in great repute; soothsaying and enchantment were universally practised. Great, therefore, must have been the influence exerted by this unpretentious production, so as to bring about the effects described by the publisher of the edition of 1766. The edition of the Welsh Bible in a small size, published in 1630, by Sir Thomas Myddleton and Mr. Rowland Heylin, gave great joy to the Vicar. This inspired him to compose one of his best cantos, "An advice to hear and read God's Word." He exhorts his fellow-countrymen in a lively and pathetic style to magnify their privilege

by purchasing and reading it, since it was to be had now for a crown.

It is a noteworthy fact that the two poets whose works have been best known in Wales, and which have produced the most beneficial effects on the morals and religion of the country, were from the neighbourhood of Llandovery. The one, Vicar Prichard, was the prince of moral and religious poetry of the seventeenth century; the other, William Williams, of Pantycelyn, a farmhouse not far from the town, and whose mortal remains lie in the churchyard of Llanfair ar y bryn, above the town, was the *facile princeps* of the eighteenth century, and indeed hitherto of all time. The writer who has supplied us with most of the above facts thus ably compares and contrasts the two:—"Prichard was a planet shining in the night; Williams was the morning star of the revival. The former was like the brook in the desert, reviving the traveller amidst the arid wastes of the wilderness; the latter like the river Thames, the glory of the metropolis, and conveying to the citizens treasures from all parts. The first traverses the country from Dan to Beersheba, to teach Israel and Judah the laws of the Lord; the second almost wholly occupies the hill of Calvary, to adore, to praise, and manifest the great things done there. Prichard is a general labourer, engaged in every work around the palace of the great King, while Williams occupies the head of the table to supply the children with the feast. The old Vicar is the poet of the understanding and conscience, but the old Methodist of Pantycelyn is the poet of the affections and the will. One is our family bard, to amuse and instruct us on the hearth; the other is our sacred poet, enabling us to pour out our most consecrated feelings in the sanctuary. Eternal regard be to their memory."* The latter remark explains (together with the fact that the Vicar's songs are not suitable for sacred music) why Williams's works are now better known than ever, while "Canwyll y Cymry" is almost forgotten.

Judge Johnes, speaking of the veneration felt in Wales for the memory of Vicar Prichard, says that it "is mainly attributable to a small volume of poems, which are not a little remarkable as a summary of Christian doctrine and duty, at once simple, poetical, and concise. No book, except the Bible, has been there so much

* Traethodydd for 1846, pp. 134-155; and Trysorfa Ysprydol, vol. i. pp. 321-326.

and so enthusiastically studied; its author may justly be styled the Watts of Wales; and notwithstanding the unhappy divisions that have since his day distracted her, the undiminished popularity of this little book proves that there is even yet no schism in the Principality as far as the 'Divine Poems' of 'Vicar Prichard' are concerned. I can hardly hope that the following imperfect translations will convey anything like a just conception of his bardic merits, though they may perhaps afford some slight idea of the peculiarities of his style.

“GWEDDI FOREUOL. MORNING PRAYER.

At dawn, when first thy slumber flies,
 Raise to the Lord of Hosts thine eyes;
 To him who watched, and gave, and blest,
 Thy hours of helplessness and rest,
 Oh! give the first fruits of thy heart,
 The first fruits of thy mind and tongue;
 For, second thoughts are not the part
 Of Him to whom all hearts belong!

“And two other stanzas.

“CYNGHOR I'R MILWR. COUNSEL TO THE SOLDIER.

Before thou wendest to the fray
 (For King and country)—Soldier! pray
 The Lord of Hosts to give thee heart
 And strength to act a warrior's part.

In danger, prayer shall more avail
 To him who shares the deadly strife,
 Than mail to guard when foes assail,
 Or brand to take the foeman's life. Etc., etc.

“In almost every cottage where the Scriptures were to be found, the Vicar's little volume occupied a place beside them. It became a class-book in every school, and its most striking passages passed into proverbs among the peasantry.” *

The only remark, in the above very just estimate of Vicar Prichard's character and peculiarity, likely to mislead, is to call him the “Watts of Wales.” The metre into which he has thought it proper to render the original stanzas, surely tends to confirm the appositeness of this epithet; but this evidently is the weakest point of the version. If he had adhered to the same metre as the

* Johnes's Essay, pp. 16, 17.

original, it would have been at once apparent that he had hardly anything in common with Watts, except his piety and generosity. Watts's stanzas were hymns adapted to be sung in public worship, but the Vicar's compositions were never sung even on the hearth. The metre was a Trochaic four feet, a specimen of which has already been given.* Though not adapted for singing, the comparative shortness of the lines, the plainness of the language, the quaintness of the style, as well as the witticism of many of the expressions, made a ready and lasting impression on the memory. The author during his lifetime does not appear to have printed more than two cantos of the work, but a complete edition was published a year after his death, in 1645, by the Rev. Stephen Hughes, and a second edition by the same hand in 1672, to which reference has already been made. The latest, if not the best, edition of "*Canwyll y Cymry*" was published at Llandovery, in 1841, containing explanatory notes and a biography of the author, by the Rev. Rice Rees, B.D. This reached a third reissue in 1867.

Another worthy author of this period, who indeed exerted a most beneficent influence on his countrymen, both by his spoken and written word, was the Rev. Morgan Llwyd, of Wrexham. He was born at Cynfal, in the parish of Maentwrog, Merioneth. Having been led to Wrexham, about the year 1632, when the Rev. Walter Cradoc was curate there, either to attend school or to follow some trade or profession, he was converted to Christ, as he says, through his powerful and pointed ministry. Mr. Cradoc, as we shall have occasion to observe again, was obliged to leave the Church of England. In consequence of this, he became the pastor of one of the earliest independent churches in North Wales, in the very same town, Wrexham. On his giving up his charge here, Mr. Morgan Llwyd was elected to be his successor, where he laboured with earnestness and success until his death in 1659. He is described as a man of strong intellect, deep in his meditations, and of simple piety. He published several works, the most important being "*Llyfr y Tri aderyn*" (The book of the three birds), "*Cyfarwyddyd i'r Cymry*" (Instruction for the Welsh), and "*Gair o'r Gair*" (A Word from the Word). Of these three, the most popular was the first, being written in the style of a conversation between the eagle, the dove, and the vulture. It has

* See page 32.

been thought that the eagle represented Cromwell; the dove, the Nonconformists; and the vulture, the Established Church. But undoubtedly the book has a meaning within a meaning, and though the characters have, perhaps, an immediate reference to the above-mentioned parties, the dove, beyond representing the Nonconformists, is intended to describe the true Christian of every age; the vulture represents the enemies of the truth, and persecutors of spiritual religion; while the eagle, in his regal attitude, represents the conscientious, impartial man, mediating between the contending parties. The author proves himself a profound thinker, a fearless denouncer of hypocrisy and error, as well as a perfect master of the somewhat difficult style of composition which he has adopted. It is well worthy of remark that the original productions of this period far surpass the translated works in intrinsic merit, and especially in their adaptability to the wants of the age.

In the year 1666,† appeared another of these able original works, entitled, “Hanes y Ffydd” (The History of the Faith), in subsequent editions developed into “Hanes a Rhinwedd y Ffydd Gristianogol” (The History and Virtue of the Christian Faith). The author’s name is Charles Edwards, and, strange to say, this is almost all that is known for certainty respecting him. It is generally agreed, however, that he was born at Rhyd y Croesau, in the parish of Llansilin, Denbighshire. Some think he was a clergyman; but the only fact which can be authoritatively stated is, that he was at least a member of the Church of England of the same type and spirit as Leighton and Gurnal. Besides his own great work, he published in 1671, a new edition of Bishop Jewel’s “Defence of the Church of England,” first published in 1595, as already described; and in the year 1675, he corrected the proofs of a work, entitled, “Christian Instructions, showing, how to walk with God all the day,” by the Rev. Thomas Gouge, but translated into Welsh by Mr. Richard Jones, of Denbigh. Mr. Charles Edwards wrote a short address at the end of the book, in which he mentions that Mr. Gouge was printing 3500 of these books to be distributed *gratis* among the Welsh. When dilating on the fact that it was an Englishman who was then benefiting Wales,

* “Traethodau Llenyddol,” Dr. Edwards, p. 140.

† Traethodydd for 1872, “Hen Lyfrau y Cymry,” by Ioan Pedr, p. 101.

he remarks, that if any one in the days of Owen Glyndwr had ventured to say that the people whom he contended against would be their best friends ere long, it would have been as incredible to them as Samson's riddle was inexplicable to the Philistine youth—"Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

His own work on the Christian faith contains a history of the Christian Church in different countries, and more especially among the Welsh, with an inquiry into the external and internal evidences of Christianity. He writes in an easy, readable style, and his happy use of metaphor and illustrations shows that he was conversant with all the sciences and arts of the time, and a keen observer of natural phenomena. This work reached its sixth edition in 1822. The first edition, as already mentioned, appeared in 1666; the second in London, in 1671; the third in Oxford, in 1677; the fourth in Shrewsbury, by John Rogers, in 1722; the fifth at Dolgelley, by Richard Jones, in 1811; and the sixth also at Dolgelley, in 1822, under the superintendence of Dr. Williams, of Llanbedrog, near Pwllheli.

We have now brought our review of the spread of general literature among the Welsh to the end of what may be described as the most sterile portion of the period anterior to the establishment of Sunday Schools. Compared with the multitude of books of all kinds issuing from the press of the present day, and the immense quantity of newspaper literature circulating in the country, the appearance of works during that period was "like angels' visits, few and far between." It must be remembered, however, that facts and figures have a different meaning, relatively speaking, at that time, from what they have now. The issuing of a book then was never intended to create a demand for it. In days of such uncertain reception, the demand must have existed before the work was ever prepared. When we take into consideration the expense at which books were then produced, the slow mode of transit, and the paucity of agencies for their distribution, a higher value and an enlarged meaning must be given to what appear absolutely but feeble efforts.

Without entering minutely upon the history of the literature of the years 1666-1784, it will suffice for us to state that as we have found the Bible to be oftener published during those years,

so also other books became more general, both by the issuing of first editions, and a reissue of those which were already in circulation. It is said that in the latter half of the seventeenth century above sixty new books were published, besides new editions of works previously issued. Perhaps the most remarkable prose work of this interval, both for originality of conception and completeness of execution, was "Y Bardd Cwsg" (The Sleeping Bard), by Ellis Wyn, of Lasynys, near Harlech, a moral and religious allegory, which appeared about 1700. It was translated into English, in 1860, by George Borrow, author of "Wild Wales," and "The Bible in Spain." Up to the limits of time just now specified, it will be found that there is no mention of any of the books named as having been printed in Wales; the fact is, that there was no printing press in Wales until the year 1734, which was set up then in Anglesea. The labours of the Revs. Stephen Hughes, Griffith Jones, Llandowror, and William Williams of Pantycelyn, both by original productions, especially the last of the three, and by organizing means of circulation, were the most prominent during the period immediately preceding the rise of Sunday Schools. With regard to the general intelligence of the people of Wales from the Reformation downward, we cannot do better than quote the words of Henry Richard, M.P., on the subject. He says:—

"I believe that at no period of their history had the people of Wales sunk into that utter mental torpidity which marks—if I may say so without offence—some portions of the English peasantry. Grossly ignorant and superstitious, multitudes of them undoubtedly were, through the long ages of neglect of which I have already spoken. But there were always influences at work which saved them from absolute stagnation of intellect. The traditions of their national history—not less fascinating because surrounded with a nimbus of poetic myth—telling of their ancient kings, Druids and bards, of Arthur and Merlin, of Llywarch Hen and Taliesin, of Howell the Good, and Llewellyn, 'ein llyw olaf' (our last prince), as he is still fondly called—were cherished with great tenacity by the popular mind. . . . Fragments of poetry and music, coming down from immemorial times, were always floating plentifully in the air. . . . In the worst times, also, the popular merry-makings were never without some intellectual element which saved them from degenerating into mere sensual orgies; for the harp was there,

and ‘pennillion’ singing, an improvisation in verse accompanying the harp, and in some parts of the country a sort of broad farces or dramatic pasquinades, under the name of interludes, acted by the peasantry. And there were better things than these; for sometimes the people’s natural genius for minstrelsy and song would seem suddenly to blossom with even an exuberant fertility. If any one doubts this, he has but to consult the collection of old melodies, and the words to which they were sung, taken down from the lips of the peasants in the vales of Neath and Glamorgan, by Miss Jane Williams, of Aberpergwm, herself—according to the testimony of Mr. Chorley—the ‘most exquisite amateur singer he had ever heard.’ My friend Dr. Davies, of Swansea—and there are few more competent judges—says of these compositions, ‘I consider them without exception the finest pastorals I know, and may be backed against the world for poetry, music, and purity of sentiment.’ And those published by Miss Williams are only a small selection from hundreds which she noted down from the singing of the country people, all of which are supposed to have sprung into existence from about 1680 to 1780.” *

Though it be beyond our present object to inquire into the intellectual state of the country during the fourth period of Welsh literature, we may, however, briefly state that a great impetus was given to the publication of books by the establishment of Sunday Schools, the further development of the art of printing, the institution of literary societies, and the general revival of religion among all denominations. Mr. Richard has entered into very minute statistics, showing the number of books and periodicals published up to the date of the publication of his letters in the *Morning and Evening Star* in 1865.† In the Report of the Commissioners (of whom he was one) appointed to inquire into the condition of intermediate and higher education in Wales in 1881, we are presented with a summary brought down sixteen years later. This report says, that “Twelve newspapers, with a weekly circulation of 74,500; eighteen magazines, with a circulation of 90,300; and two quarterly publications, with a circulation of 3000, are published in Welsh. A large number of useful books, translations for the most part, are yearly published in Welsh. We were told

* “Letters on the Social and Political Condition of Wales,” p. 32.

† “Letters,” p. 39.

by one witness, that in the year 1875, no less a sum than £100,000 was spent in Welsh literature of all kinds." * It hardly needs to be added that a large quantity of English literature is also regularly consumed in Wales. One fact seems to indicate a greater demand for English literature than for Welsh ; for while there is no *Welsh* daily newspaper published throughout the whole Principality, there are two English ones published in South Wales alone. The best English publications, whether books, daily newspapers, or weekly and monthly serials and periodicals, are much in demand in all Welsh towns and in not a few country districts besides. Taking all these facts into consideration, we may venture to convert into a direct assertion what Mr. Richard only suggests as a query, that there is "no population of the same class in the kingdom among whom the taste for solid reading, and the intelligence and mental activity it indicates, are more conspicuous."

* "Report," p. xlvii.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL CONDITION OF WALES FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE RISE OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS—DIRECT EDUCATIONAL PROVISIONS.

The connection between the spread of literature and the establishment of schools—Indirect evidences of the existence of schools—No definite records except of the endowed schools—A brief account of all the endowed schools of Wales—How far they supplied religious instruction—The educational and other charities of the Principality in 1880—Some references to other schools—Rev. Thomas Gouge's system—An account of his life—A society for promoting English instruction in Wales—Archbishop Tillotson's funeral sermon to Gouge—His schools not adapted to Welsh temperament and feeling—Rev. Griffith Jones Llanddowror and his *Circulating Schools*—His life—His own account of the schools in the volumes of "Welsh Piety"—General diffusion of the schools—Other labours of Mr. Jones—His connection with the great Methodist Revival—Continuation of the schools after his death—Statistics of the schools for forty years—An account of Madam Bevan's charity—Present application—General conclusions.

It is only at two periods, and those not very far the one from the other, during this somewhat considerable interval, that any attempt was made to organize a complete system of schools throughout the country generally. The educational state of the country for the remaining time, must be inferred from the records of the establishment of individual schools, and from facts bearing upon the question, already brought into notice in the preceding chapters. The references made to so many editions of the Bible issued during this period, and the ever-increasing number of new books from time to time emanating from the press, naturally lead to the conclusion that schools must have been previously started, teaching the population to read, in order to enable them to consume such literature—in fact to create the very demand for it. The fact of so many eminent men also, of whom mention has already been

made, who translated the Scriptures into the Welsh tongue, directly from the original languages, and who enriched its literature in other ways, having gone up from their native country to the great universities of the kingdom, sufficiently well grounded in the rudiments of knowledge to enter at once on the university course, plainly points to the existence of schools in different parts before those organized at the two periods specified, and that those schools were not altogether of the simple elementary class. Amongst the number, we have already mentioned the names of William Salesbury, Dr. Morgan, Dr. Richard Davies, Dr. Parry, Dr. Davies, of Mallwyd, and Edmund Prys, archdeacon of Merioneth; to these may be added Wroth, Erbury, Walter Cradoc, Vavasor Powel, Peregrine Phillips, and Hugh Owen, of Bron y Clydwr, among the Nonconformists, besides a great many clergymen of the Church of England, of every age of the period. The English schools, of towns not far from the Welsh borders, were also resorted to, as at later times, to supply the educational needs of the country. It is distinctly stated that Daniel Rowlands, of Llangeitho, was brought up at Hereford School; and Shrewsbury School, from its advantageous position for youth from North Wales, attracted a goodly proportion of the better class of the sons of Cambria within its shades, from time to time. Most of, if not all, the endowed schools of Wales were founded and started during the period between the Reformation and the rise of the Sunday schools; and the public spirit which led to the founding of these in every county of Wales is most likely to have found a vent in starting minor institutions, serving for their day, but not placed on such a footing as to be handed over to the posterity of our days.

The endowed schools of Wales, at present attract a considerable amount of attention, but the most interesting facts in their history are very little known by the public, the information about them being contained either in musty deeds, chancery records, or not very accessible Commissioners' Reports. We presume, therefore, that a brief abstract of their history, besides directly elucidating this branch of our inquiry, will be acceptable to the general reader. An additional value will be given to our digest from the fact that by quoting from the "Report of the Committee on Higher and Intermediate Education in Wales," published in 1881, we can present an authentic account of the *present* revenue of each school.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOLS OF WALES, COMPRISING THE TIME AT WHICH THEY WERE ESTABLISHED, THE NAMES OF THE FOUNDERS, AND AMOUNT OF REVENUES IN 1846 AND 1880.

COUNTY OF ANGLESEA.

BEAUMARIS.—1. In 1609, David Hughes gave a house in the town, to be for ever used for a free grammar school, and certain lands in Anglesea, the profits of which were to be employed for stipends for master and usher; for help to one or two of the poorest scholars of the school, towards their travel or setting forward to the university, or in some trade or occupation; and for the support of an almshouse. And he gave the surplus of his estate to provide fellowships in some college in Oxford. The income of the charity in 1832 was £617, by 1846 it exceeded £700, three-fourths of which is applied to the grammar school, and the remaining fourth to the almshouses. No fellowships were ever founded, and only two exhibitions of £20 each yearly, tenable at Jesus College, Oxford.

2. Under the will of William Lewis, D.D., made in 1681, lands in Caernarvonshire were purchased, exceeding in value £200 a year, the rents of which are applicable to eight exhibitions of £10 each at Jesus College, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, preference given to Anglesea scholars. The whole income of £1200, after 1880, is available for the purposes of the school.

COUNTY OF CAERNARVON.

BANGOR.—In 1557, Geoffrey Glynne, LL.D., gave lands to the bishops of Rochester and Bangor for a grammar school to be for ever maintained in the town of Bangor. He gave other lands of the yearly value of £20, to the use of ten scholars, diligently to be brought up at the school in virtue and learning, and to be lodged within his house called the Friars, which he gave for the school. The number of scholars was to be limited to one hundred. The rents of the charity estate amounted, in 1832, to £360, and the annual value in 1846 was nearly £500. In 1880, the income was £776.

BOTTWNOG.—In 1616, the then Bishop of Bangor, by his will gave lands to feoffees or trustees, for the maintenance of a free grammar school within the parish of Mellteyrn or Bottwnog, his native parish, and £6 a year to two poor scholars in the school. The charity estate consists of a farm, of the yearly value of £200, with residences for a head master and usher, and school buildings.

DENIO.—William Vaughan, in 1773, by will charged an estate, now in the possession of the Mostyn family, with £40 a year, as a stipend to a grammar school. Hugh Jones, a clergyman, had, in 1695, given money to the Vaughans for founding or augmenting the endowment of a school at Denio, and that devise of Mr. Vaughan was made in lieu of such money. Up to 1843, the £40 was paid yearly by the Mostyn family to the master of a school at Pwllheli. The rent-charge has been withheld since 1843; but it is said the Mostyn family are willing to continue the payment, and secure the endowment.

COUNTY OF MERIONETH.

DOLGELLEY.—1. John Ellis, clerk, in 1665, gave lands to trustees for the maintenance of an able schoolmaster, to teach twelve poor children, without charge, until they should be sixteen years of age.

2. Ellis Lewis, clerk, 1727, gave lands to be used in conjunction with the devise of Dr. John Ellis, to the support of a free grammar school.

3. In 1793, John Tamberlain, clerk, rector of Dolgelley, added a sum in stock to the foundation. The income of the school was, in 1832, £43 10s. ; but since then some of the farms, if not all, have been sold, and the capital funded, by which the income has been somewhat increased. In 1880, it was reported to be £73.

LLANEGRYN.—1. Hugh Owen, in 1650, gave money for a free school in Llanegryn for ever. A rent charge of £20 is payable in respect of Mr. Owen's foundation.

2. In 1668, Griffith Owen gave money to be laid out in land, and directed one-third to be paid to a writing master, one-third to the master for catechising the scholars and others in the parish church, and the other third part for binding certain of the poor scholars, apprentices. The income of the charity, in 1832, was £81 5s. William Wynne, Esq., of Peniarth, on one of whose farms the rent-charge is made, paid the money up to 1812, but after his death only one member of his family among whom his estate was divided paid, so that in the year 1847 the sum of £616 13s. 4d., remained as arrears to the trustees. Elementary subjects only have been taught in the school since 1847.

LLANYCIL including **BALA.**—Edmund Meyricke, D.D., and a member of the chapter of Bangor, in 1712, gave lands for a school, £15 yearly for clothing the boys, and founded six scholarships and six exhibitions in Jesus College, Oxford. The sum expended upon the school from the charity estate, in 1847, was £155; viz. £60 for clothing the boys, £80 to the master, and house, garden and lands free, to the value of £15. The remainder goes for the exhibitions at Jesus College, open to all natives of North Wales. Income in 1880, £166.

COUNTY OF DENBIGH.

DENBIGH TOWN.—In 1726, land was conveyed to the corporation of Denbigh towards the maintenance of a free grammar school. In 1727, lands were purchased by subscription and settled for the same purpose. The rental of these lands in 1832 was £55 10s. In 1880, income almost all sunk in the school buildings.

LLANRWST.—In or about 1612, Sir John Wynne, of Gwydir, founded a hospital and free school for the town of Llanrwst. A free school existed here in 1803, but from then until 1837, the Charity Commissioners reported that no school answering to Sir John Wynne's foundation had existed. The hospital was dealt with as private property of Lord Gwydir since 1811, but subsequently the Attorney-General succeeded against Lord Willoughby d'Eresby to establish the right of the hospital to certain tithes and property of the yearly value of £600, whereof an adequate portion has been assigned for the support of the school. Income in 1880, £890.

RUABON.—A grammar school existed here before 1632, and in 1707, Mr. Robinson, the then vicar of the parish, gave lands for the better support of it. The school income in 1832, was £99 18s.; in 1880, £150.

RUTHIN.—1. In 1595, Dr. Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster, obtained from the Queen a grant of a moiety of the advowson of Llanelidan for the support of a grammar school in Ruthin, according to the statutes of the dean in that behalf. The moiety of the tithes of Llanelidan have been commuted for a rent-charge of £306.

2. In 1740, Edward Lloyd, clerk, gave money for the benefit of Ruthin school with which the trustees bought lands of the yearly value, in 1847, of £100; and the rents are appropriated in exhibitions of £20 and £25 each at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, tenable for four years by poor boys, or young men, educated at the school for five years at the least, and being the best scholars. Income in 1880, £550, with prospect of increase.

WREXHAM.—In 1603, Valentine Broughton gave lands to the citizens of Chester, charged with £6 13s. 4d. for the maintenance of a schoolmaster at Wrexham, for the education of youth in good erudition and learning. Income in 1880, £48.

COUNTY OF FLINT.

ST. ASAPH.—Bishop Barrow, who died in 1679, either founded or augmented the endowment of the grammar school here. The endowment provided a salary of £50 a year to the master; the cost of books and necessities for free boys; a piece of land, let at £2 a year; and a schoolroom, but no house. This school has come under a new scheme in 1880. New school buildings having been erected, the income now is only £55.

HAWARDEN.—In 1606, George Ledsam gave money for the erection and maintenance for ever of a free grammar school at Hawarden. The master receives a stipend of £20, with a residence and good schoolrooms. Income in 1880, £24.

NEWMARKET.—In 1713, John Wynne gave a school house and a yearly rent-charge of £40, for ever, part of which was to support a public grammar school. The Commissioners of Charity, however, state that this charity has had no existence, as a source of benefit to the parish, since 1764; and the rent-charge has been in arrear since 1799.

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY.

DEYTHUR.—In 1696, the Hon. Andrew Newport conveyed to trustees a school house, built by him in the lordship of Deythur, and certain lands for the maintenance of a school. In 1832, the income of the school lands was £87 (shortly to be increased to £100), besides a large house and stable. In 1880, the income was £120.

COUNTY OF MONMOUTH.

ABERGAVENNY.—King Henry VIII., by letters patent, bearing date 24th July, 1543, founded a grammar school for boys and youths, for the establishment of which he granted to the since dissolved corporation

of the town, certain rectories and tithes belonging to the then late dissolved priory of Bergavenny and monastery of Usk, subject to a rent of 40s. to the king, and to the payment of certain salaries to the master and usher. In the reign of William III., the corporation of Bergavenny was dissolved. In 1760, an Act was passed for vesting the rectory of Bedgworth in Jesus College, Oxford, for ever, in trust, to pay yearly to the master of Bergavenny £40; to admit the fellows and scholars from the school to such stipend and advantages as should be enjoyed by the other fellows and scholars of the college; and to pay yearly to two boys of the school £5 each. The income of the charity, in 1847, was about £180 a year, exclusive of the stipend payable by the principal and fellows of Jesus College to the master. In 1880, by the voluntary payment of Jesus College, and an extension of the local charity, the income reached £270.

LLANTILIO CROESNAU.—In 1654, James Powell gave lands and premises of the yearly value, in 1847, of £150 for the support of a school and other charitable purposes.

MONMOUTH.—By letters patent of King James, dated March 19, 1614–5, granted on the petition of William Jones, citizen and haberdasher of London, it was ordained that there should be for ever, in the town of Monmouth, one almshouse, for the maintenance of poor people, and also one free grammar school, to be called “The Almshouse and Free Grammar School of William Jones, in Monmouth.” In January, 1613–4, lands in Monmouth were purchased and conveyed to members of the Haberdashers’ Company; and in 1613 and 1614 lands near New Cross, in Surrey, and Deptford, in Kent, were purchased with money supplied by Mr. Jones, and conveyed to the governors of the charity. In the report of the Charity Commissioners, made in 1823, it is stated that the rents of the estate in Kent and Surrey amounted to £771. In January, 1847, the ordinances of the charity were revised, and the present laws, framed by the Haberdashers’ Company, provide among other things, that exhibitions of the value of £30 a year each should be open to scholars who have been three years in the school; and such exhibitions are tenable for four years at any college or hall of Oxford or Cambridge. In 1880, the company applied a yearly sum of £3296 for the maintenance of the school.

USK.—Roger Edwards, who died in 1624, founded a school and almshouses at this place. The Charity Commissioners reported that the rental of the charity estate was £438 10s. In 1880, the school endowment was £205.

COUNTY OF GLAMORGAN.

COWBRIDGE.—A school is said to have been founded here by the Stradling family, but the first endowment of which there is any record is by Sir Leoline, or Llewellyn, Jenkins, in 1685, who filled several public offices in the reign of Charles II., and had been educated at Cowbridge. He devised to the principal, fellows and scholars of Jesus College, Oxford, all his lands, and the free school and school house at Cowbridge. He charged his land with £10 a year to support the master; £6 a year to each of five pensioners for four years, to be educated at the school; to three of these pensioners as should be fit for college, an exhibition of £10 a piece for four years, if not elected

in the meantime to a scholarship or fellowship; and a further sum of £10 to the master for teaching ten youths from the town of Cowbridge and the neighbouring parishes. He founded two fellowships at Jesus College, in the election of whom a respect should be had, *cæteris paribus*, to those bred at Cowbridge school. In 1880, the income of the endowment was £50.

SWANSEA.—In 1682, Hugh Gore, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, granted an estate comprising six hundred and fifty acres of mountain land, in the parishes of Llan-dyfodwg and Llangeinor, to instruct in the Latin and Greek tongues twenty poor children, the sons of the poorer sort of burgesses. The corporation of Swansea have augmented the endowment by securing to the master £20 a year. The surface of the Charity Farm was let in 1847 for £70 a year, but its principal value consists in the unworked coal and iron-stone with which the property abounds. The income has considerably increased of late, but much money has been spent from time to time in litigation. Income in 1880, £750.

GELLIGAER.—Edward Lewis, of Gilfach-fargoed, a grandson of Sir William Lewis, Knight (who married Ann, daughter and co-heiress of William Williams, of Gilfach-fargoed), and great-grandson of Sir Edward Lewis, Knight, of Van, near Caerphilly, and Blanch Morgan, of Tredegar, left in 1728, certain farms in the parish of Gelligaer towards educating, clothing and apprenticing poor boys, and to pay for lectures to be preached in the parishes of Gelligaer, Bedwellty, and Mynyddislwyn. Like the Swansea grammar school, the principal value of the endowment consists in its mineral resources. The two portions of the charity are now entirely separate. The school in its present form was commenced in 1875, under a scheme framed by the Endowed School Commissioners, in 1874. Income in 1880, £630, with a prospect of a steady increase from the capitalized mineral rent.

COUNTY OF CARDIGAN.

CARDIGAN TOWN.—In 1653, the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales settled £60 yearly, for the maintenance of a school here, to be paid out of the impropriate tithes of Llansantffraid. This was done under an ordinance of the Commons, made on 22nd February, 1649, for the better propagation and preaching the gospel in Wales, ejecting scandalous ministers and schoolmasters, and the redress of other grievances. The tithes of Llansantffraid, reverting to the vicars choral of St. David's, all right to the stipend assigned to the school at Cardigan, ceased at the Restoration. The school, however, remained, and in 1731, Mrs. Cornwallis directed the interest of a sum of money, set apart by her for that purpose, to be paid for the support of the school. In 1785, the corporation received in respect of that bequest a sum of £717 10s. 6d. stock, which is still invested for the purpose. Income in 1880, only £20.

LLEDROD.—In 1746, Mrs. Oliver settled lands, according to certain directions contained in the will of her husband, for the maintenance of a grammar school in this parish. The rents of the charity property amounted to £150 a year in 1836. Further particulars are given under Ystrad-meirig, with which school the endowment was almost from the very first associated.

YSTRAD-MEIRIG.—In 1759, Edward Richard, the master of a school held here, gave in perpetuity to trustees lands, the rents of which were to be paid towards its support. In 1771, the founder added more lands, and by his will, made in 1777, gave his books to his successors in the school and their scholars, but to be used only in the library. The rents of the charity amounted, in 1836, to £86 10s. a year, and the actual value of the charity estate far exceeds this sum. The school at Ynys y garn, in Lledrod, seems to have been discontinued soon after the foundation of that at Ystrad-Meirig, and the rents of the Lledrod foundation were received by the master of the Ystrad-Meirig school; a preparatory school, however, was subsequently established in Lledrod, which was conducted by a master appointed by, and responsible to, the master of Ystrad-Meirig. A new scheme for Ystrad-Meirig school came into operation in 1881. In 1880, the income of Ystrad-Meirig school was £206, that of Lledrod £183.

COUNTY OF CAERMARTHEN.

CAERMARTHEN TOWN.—By letters patent of the 18th year of Queen Elizabeth, her Majesty granted a grammar school in the town of Caermarthen. Nothing is now known of this foundation. In 1644, the then Bishop of Llandaff gave £20 a year to the school of Caermarthen, to be issuing out of the rectory of St. Ishmael for ever. In 1676, the Archdeacon of Caermarthen gave premises in the town to the masters of the free school there, successively, for ever. The income consists of £20, issuing out of the tithes of St. Ishmael, and £15 is paid by the corporation yearly for house-rent. A new scheme has lately been applied to this school. Income in 1880, £137.

LLANDOVERY.—Thomas Phillips, of Brunswick Square, London, in the year 1847, transferred into the names of five trustees £4666 13s. 4d., three per cent. stock (producing an income of £140 a year), for founding and endowing a school here, and intended chiefly for fitting young men to become efficient ministers of the Church of England, in the Principality. Among other conditions, the founder enjoined “that the scholars should be instructed in Welsh reading, grammar, and composition; in English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, arithmetic, algebra, and mathematics; in sacred, English, and general history, and geography; and in such other branches of education as the trustees, with the sanction of the visitor, should appoint. The Welsh language shall be taught exclusively during one hour every school day, and be then the sole medium of communication in the school, so as to familiarize the scholars with its use as a colloquial language. The master shall give lectures in that language upon subjects of a philological, scientific, and general character, so as to supply the scholars with examples of its use as a literary language, and the medium of instruction on grave and important subjects. The primary intent and object of the founder (which is instruction and education in the Welsh language) shall be faithfully observed. Should the language, however, cease as a colloquial and literary language, the education shall still be such as to qualify young men either for Lampeter college or other useful callings; and it is recommended that instruction in geology, mineralogy, and chemistry—particularly such portions of those sciences as may be

applicable to the soil and substrata of the Principality—shall be substituted for the disused Welsh language; the object of the founder being the dissemination of useful and practical knowledge in Wales, and the elevation of the character of its people, both morally and intellectually." Income in 1880, £700.

COUNTY OF PEMBROKE.

ST. DAVID'S.—A school has existed here from a remote period, and was probably established by the dean and chapter, but there seems to be no document by which its origin is explained. Before the Reformation a collegiate foundation existed, the remains of which still are visible. The master of the school has a vicar's stall in the cathedral, and receives an ancient yearly payment from the chapter, of £10, and a second payment of £10 10s., styled a gift. Six of the scholars are to be educated as choristers, and each receives £3 3s. 4d. from the chapter funds.

Haverfordwest.—1. In 1613, lands were conveyed by Thomas Lloyd to trustees, who should for ever cause an efficient grammar school to be kept within the town.

2. John Milward, in 1654, gave a house in, and lands near, Birmingham, to the principal of Brazenose College, the bailiff of Birmingham, and the mayor of Haverfordwest; the rents and profits to be divided in equal parts between the college, the free school of Birmingham, and the free school of Haverfordwest; and the portion of the college to be bestowed on a scholar towards part of his education and maintenance, to be sent from the free schools of Birmingham and Haverfordwest by turns. The nett income up to 1847 had not been more than £100 a year from both endowments, but it was estimated that by a change about to be introduced then in the disposal of Milward's estate, the income would be increased to £300 a year. By the year 1880, the income had reached £570.

PEMBROKE TOWN.—There is a small foundation for a grammar school at this place, amounting to £11 3s. 4d.

COUNTY OF RADNOR.

CWM-DAUDDWR.—The Rev. Charles Price, in 1719, gave certain land after the death of his son, who lived until 1780, to support a school here. For many years it was united to a school at Rhayader, but from 1836 had a separate existence. The charity estate at that time was of the value of £50 a year.

PRESTEIGN.—In 1505, John Beddoes settled lands for ever to support a school here. In 1827, the charity property produced a rental of £138 18s. 6d., and in 1847, over £150 per annum. Income in 1880, £324.

COUNTY OF BRECKNOCK.

BRECON TOWN.—On the morrow of the Nativity, A.D. 1283, Thomas Beck, who was then Bishop of St. David's and Lord Treasurer of England, founded a college by a charter, giving for its perpetual support twenty-one parish churches as prebends to an equal number

of canons. This college was intended for the good of the neighbourhood of Ystrad-Tywi, but the place where it was built is not mentioned in the charter, and some have identified Llangadock as the site of Bishop Beck's college, whence it was said to have been removed to Abergwili by Bishop Gower, elected to the see of St. David's in 1328. Others maintain that the college was built at Abergwili in the first instance, for this place is mentioned as early as 1299, in a charter of Edward I., as a collegiate foundation, and references are made to it in documents bearing date 6th of May, 1334, which are also connected with 10th of April, 1331.

On the 19th of January, in the thirty-third year of his reign, King Henry VIII., by his charter, founded the College of Christ, Brecknock, on the site of the Priory of Friars Preachers in that town, which had been surrendered to the king by the late prior and convent; and the king granted to William, then Bishop of St. David's, and his successors for ever, the priory, and all lands and possessions which had come to the hands of his Majesty by virtue of such surrender, to be held by fealty only; and also the College of Abergwili, with full licence and authority to transfer the ministers of the College of Abergwili to Christ's College, Brecknock. By the same charter, the king empowered the Bishop of St. David's and all ministers of the College of Abergwili to reside at Brecknock, in the church of the late priory, and within the ambit and precinct thereof, and to hold all manors, lands, churches and possessions, theretofore of the College of Abergwili, for the support and maintenance of Christ's College, Brecknock. In the reign of Elizabeth this right was confirmed to the bishop. Mention is made in the ordinances of Archbishop Abbot of a master and usher of the school, and, by letters patent of King Henry VIII., it was ordained that a grammar school should be founded at Brecknock. In 1847, this school, which had been for some time closed, was carried on by the incumbent of the parish in which it is situate. The yearly rent-charges for which the tithes annexed to the prebends have been commuted, and which went to the support of the collegiate church and the school, amounted to £7213 10s. 0½d. In 1880, the income was about £1200, but at the time, temporarily burdened owing to a large expenditure incurred in improving and extending the buildings.

Of the thirty-two schools mentioned in the above summary, six were founded in the sixteenth century, seventeen in the seventeenth, eight in the eighteenth, and one in the nineteenth. This activity in founding schools very nearly corresponds with the activity which has been already described in the circulation of Scriptures and the propagation of general literature. There are no means of ascertaining how many pupils actually passed through these schools during the period of their existence, or their efficiency at different times; but one fact at least is plainly proved with regard to each, and which is intimately connected with our present inquiry, viz. that they aimed directly at influencing the religious character, as well

as developing the intellectual powers of their pupils. In these days, when secular instruction has almost wholly monopolized the elementary school curriculum, and is threatening also to invade the territory of the intermediate and higher schools, we are apt to forget the peculiarly religious character of the foundations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sir T. Phillips conclusively proves that religious instruction was an essential part of their course of study. Summarizing his remarks on this subject, he says, "A strange misapprehension exists in many minds that grammar schools were founded for classical instruction only, instead of being foundations wherein religious instruction, in accordance with the formularies of the Church of England, should be given by men licensed for their office, after an examination into their religious tenets." * It may be assumed that what is specially mentioned in most, was actually practised in all the schools of the earlier foundations—"That the scholars should be taught the Articles of the Christian faith, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and all other things concerning the Christian faith and religion." It was early declared by the judges that the school is, by the laws of England, an ecclesiastical institution, and this decision is only modified by laws passed since the reign of William III. Grammar schools were so called, because a grammar of the Latin tongue, to which Erasmus and Dean Colet contributed, having been published in 1513, by William Lily, the first master of St. Paul's school, and approved of by Henry VIII. and Edward VI., it was by Royal injunction required that it should be taught in all schools, and hence public or free schools were so designated, even when the founder did not direct the learned languages to be taught.

Before leaving this subject of the endowed schools, it may not be uninteresting to add a few facts with regard to the nature and value of the endowments of Wales, as they are given in the Commissioners' Report for 1881. The schools of Newmarket, Flintshire; Llanegryn, Merionethshire; Cwm-dauddwr, Radnorshire, and a few others, are mentioned as having either fallen into abeyance, or into the condition of merely elementary schools. There were only three endowed schools for girls throughout all Wales and Monmouthshire, viz. the Howell's school at Denbigh, with an income of £2500, the Howell's school at Llandaff, with an income of £1900,

* Sir T. Phillips's "Wales," p. 395.

and Dr. Daniel Williams's school at Dolgelley, with an income of about £300 a year.

The aggregate amount of endowed *charities* of Wales and Monmouthshire, as given in the Digest of 1877, but which is considerably less than the true value by 1880, was distributed as follows:

	£	s.	d.
North Wales	14,802	15	1
South Wales	10,047	4	10
Monmouthshire	6,827	2	5
Total	£31,677	2	4

The aggregate endowments of existing *schools* in 1880, providing for the education of boys only, was—

	£
North Wales	4,352
South Wales	4,665
Monmouthshire	3,771
Total	£12,788

Besides this, there was in the year 1880, about £4000 devoted to elementary education, and about £8000 might, under the power given by the Endowed Schools Acts, be made applicable to education from the other charitable endowments, so that the aggregate annual endowments in Wales which might be devoted to intermediate and higher education, amount to about £25,000.

	£	s.	d.
The whole <i>endowed charities</i> of the forty counties of England amount to	2,167,247	2	4
The whole <i>endowed charities</i> of thirteen counties of Wales and Monmouthshire	31,677	2	4

The proportion of *educational endowments* of Wales to those of England relatively to population, is but one to three.*

After this brief, and it is to be hoped not inapposite digression, we shall take up the few references to educational agencies which were at work contemporaneously with the founding of endowed schools. Several of the ejected ministers, in consequence of the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662, by which they were forbidden to preach, earned a precarious subsistence by keeping private adventure schools in different parts of the country. The

* "Report of Committee on Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales"—*passim*.

provisions of the Five-mile Act, passed in 1664, prove that this was a general custom. Not only were the dissenting teachers prohibited from forming separate congregations to whom to minister in spiritual things, they were also prohibited to keep a school within five miles of any town or borough under the penalty of £40. Between the years 1674 and 1681, the first successful effort was made to organize a complete system of schools throughout the Principality. The principal agent in this good work was

THE REV. THOMAS GOUGE.

He was a native of London, being the son of Dr. William Gouge, who was a minister of Blackfriars forty-six years, and who died in 1653. The son was born on the 19th Sept., 1605, brought up at Eton school, and elected a member of King's College, Cambridge, in 1626. He was presented to the benefice of Colsden, near Croydon, in Surrey, which he held for two or three years, and was removed from thence, in 1638, to St. Sepulchre, London. Here he continued to discharge the duties of the ministry with zeal and devotion for twenty-four years, when, from dissatisfaction with the terms of conformity demanded by the Act of 1662, he quitted his living, but continued throughout his life a faithful member of the Church of England. It is not known what turned his attention to Wales, but the most likely thing is that he came in contact with Charles Edwards or Stephen Hughes, or some of the Welshmen who were going up to London to solicit aid for procuring Bibles and other books for the use of the people. In the year 1674, in conjunction with several pious and eminent men, among whom were Dr. Tillotson, then Dean, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, Dr. Patrick, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Wilkins, afterwards Bishop of Chester, Richard Baxter, author of "Saints' Rest," and Mr. Firman, a London merchant, Mr. Gouge formed a society for promoting in Wales instruction in the English tongue, and to circulate the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, and other good books in the Welsh language. From an account of the engagement entered into by the associated members, together with the "Life of James Owen" and the funeral sermon of Gouge, preached by Dr. Tillotson, almost all the particulars of this good man's benefactions to Wales, and



(FROM A PORTRAIT AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.)

which ought to be highly prized by all natives of the Principality, can be gathered. The terms of the engagement are as follows:—

“Whereas there are two thousand copies of a treatise called the “Practice of Piety,” formerly translated into Welsh, and also some thousands of other licensed Welsh works, and of our Church Catechism, and a Practical Exposition of the same, now printing, the buying of which, to be freely given to poor families in Wales, would be a singular work of charity, leading to the good of many hundreds who otherwise might be destitute of the means of knowledge, and in regard that few poor children are there brought up to reading, it would be another good work of charity to raise and maintain several schools for teaching the poorest of Welsh children to read English, and the boys to write and cast accounts, whereby they will be enabled to read our English Bibles and treatises, to be more serviceable to the country, and to live more comfortable in the world; we therefore, whose names are underwritten, do promise to contribute, during our pleasure, towards the printing and buying the forementioned treatises, as also towards the teaching of poor Welsh children to read English, write and cast accounts, in such towns where schools are not already created by the charity of others; provided that this charitable and pious work be ordered and managed by Dr. Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury, and the rest whose names are underwritten:—John Tillotson, Benjamin Whichcote, Simon Ford, William Bates, William Outram, Simon Patrick, William Durham, Edward Stillingfleet, John Meriton, Hezekiah Burton, Richard Baxter, Thomas Gouge, Matthew Poole, Edward Fowler, William Turner, Richard Newman, James Reading, Thomas Griffith, John Short, William Gape, Thomas Firman.”

Amongst the agents employed in the distribution of the funds entrusted to the care of Dr. Tillotson was James Owen, a native of Caermarthenshire, who afterwards became a Nonconformist minister and who, in September, 1681, in conjunction with Philip Henry, managed a public dispute with Bishop Lloyd, at the town hall of Oswestry, on the question—“Whether ordination by such diocesans as have uninterrupted succession of canonical ordination from the Apostles, be so necessary that churches and ministry are null without it?” In the “Life of Owen,” published in 1709, is found—“An account of what has been done in Wales this last year from

Midsummer, 1674, to Lady-day, 1675, in pursuance of the above said trust, upon the encouragement given by divers worthy persons to this pious and charitable design. In fifty-one of the chief towns of Wales, eight hundred and twelve poor children have been put to school last year by the charity of others, before this trust began. There have been bought and distributed in several families thirty-two Welsh Bibles, which were all that could be had in Wales or London. Two hundred and forty New Testaments in Welsh, to be given away to poor people that can read Welsh, five hundred ‘Whole Duties of Man,’ in Welsh, to be distributed in like manner, which pious and charitable undertaking has already provoked divers of the better sort of the Welsh to put above five hundred of the poorest Welsh children to school upon their own account, so that about one thousand eight hundred and fifty in all are already put to school to learn to read English. Attested by us—

✓ “JOHN TILLOTSON.	EDWARD STILLINGFLEET.
✓ “BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE.	JOHN MERITON.
“SIMON FORD.	THOMAS GOUGE.
“WILLIAM DURHAM.	MATTHEW POOLE.”

No further report has been found of the progress of the society until the 4th November, 1681, when the funeral sermon of Gouge was preached by Dr. Tillotson, in which he thus describes the labours of that benevolent man :—

“For about nine or ten years last past, he did, as is well known to many here present, almost wholly apply his charity to Wales, because there he judged was most occasion for it; and because this was a very great work, he did not only lay out upon it whatever he could spare out of his own estates, but employed his whole time and pains to excite and engage the charity of others for his assistance in it. And in this he had two excellent designs—one to have poor children brought up to read and write, and to be carefully instructed in the principles of religion; the other to furnish persons of grown age, the poor especially, with the necessary helps and means of knowledge, as the Bible, and other books of piety and devotion, in their own language, to which end he procured the ‘Church Catechism,’ the ‘Practice of Piety,’ and that best of books, ‘The Whole Duty of Man,’ besides several other pious and useful treatises, some of them to be translated into the Welsh tongue, and

great numbers of all of them to be printed and sent down to the chief towns in Wales, to be sold at easy rates to those that were able to buy them, and to be freely given to those that were not. And in both these designs, through the blessing of God upon his unwearied endeavours, he found very great success, for by the large and bountiful contributions which, chiefly by his industry and prudent application, were obtained from charitable persons of all ranks and conditions, from the nobility and gentry of Wales and the neighbouring counties, and several of that quality in and about London, from divers of the right reverend bishops and of the clergy, and from that perpetual fountain of charity, the city of London, led on and encouraged by the most bountiful example of the Right Hon. the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen, to all which he constantly added two-thirds of his own estate, which, as I have been credibly informed, was two hundred pounds a year; I say by all these together, there were every year educated eight hundred, sometimes a thousand poor children, and by this example several of the most considerable towns of Wales were excited to bring up at their own charge the like number of poor children in the like manner, and under his inspection and care. He likewise gave very great numbers of the books above mentioned, both in the Welsh and English tongues, to so many of the poorer sort as were unable to buy them, and willing to read them. But, which was the greatest work of all, and amounted indeed to a mighty charge, he procured a new and very fair impression of the Bible and Liturgy of the Church of England in the Welsh tongue (the former impression being spent, and hardly twenty of them to be had in all London), to the number of eight thousand, one thousand whereof were freely given to the poor, and the rest sent to the principal cities and towns of Wales, to be sold to the rich at very reasonable and low rates, viz. at four shillings a-piece, well bound and clasped, which was much cheaper than any English Bible was ever sold that was of so fair a print and paper, a work of that charge, that it was not likely to have been done any other way, and for which this age, and perhaps the next, will have great cause to thank God on his behalf. In these good works he employed all his time and care and pains, and his whole heart was in them, so that he was very little affected with anything else, and seldom either minded or knew anything of the strange occurrences of this troublesome and

busy age, such as I think are hardly to be paralleled in any other; or if he did mind them, he scarce ever spoke anything of them. For this was the business he laid to heart, and knowing it to be so much and so certainly the will of his Heavenly Father, it was his meat and drink to be doing of it; and the good success he had in it was a continual feast to him, and gave him a perpetual serenity, both of mind and countenance. His great love and zeal for this work made all the pains and difficulties of it seem nothing to him. He would rise early and sit up late, and continued the same diligence and industry to the last, though he was in the threescore and seventeenth year of his age. And that he might manage the distribution of this great charity with his own hands, and see the good effect of it with his own eyes, he always once, but usually twice a year at his own charge, travelled over a great part of Wales, none of the best countries to travel in. But for the love of God and men, he endured all that, together with the extremity of heat and cold (which in their several seasons are both very great there), not only with patience, but with pleasure, so that all things considered there have not since the primitive times of Christianity been many among the sons of men to whom that glorious character of the Son of God might be better applied—that he went about doing good. And now methinks it is a pity so good a design, so happily prosecuted, should fall and die with this good man; and it is now under deliberation, if possible, still to continue and carry it on, and a very worthy and charitable person pitched upon for that purpose, who is willing to undertake that part which he that is gone performed so well. But this will depend upon the continuance of the former charities, and the concurrence of those worthy and well-disposed persons in Wales to contribute their part as formerly, which I persuade myself they will cheerfully do.”

The biographer of Thomas Firman, one of the subscribers to the undertaking of 1674, says:—

“After Mr. Gouge’s death, I find the sum of £419 9s. given to buy a number of Welsh Bibles, whereof Dr. Tillotson (then Dean of St. Paul’s), gave £50; Mr. Morris, £67; other persons the rest; but there wants in the receipts £26 13s., to balance the disbursement, and that, I judge, was Mr. Firman’s money.”

Although Archbishop Tillotson lived until 1694, nothing is known of the proceedings of the associated members after the death of

Gouge, either in circulating Welsh books or teaching Welsh children to read English, beyond this short extract given from the life of Firman.*

Very few more facts can be added to the life of Mr. Gouge. Though he had a licence to preach, and occasionally did so in Wales, nevertheless he was persecuted from place to place, and was finally excommunicated from the Church of which he was a member whilst engaged in this work of goodness. His love to the souls of men enabled him to bear these indignities patiently, and he never flagged in his labours until he finished his course with joy and exultation. He died in his sleep in the year 1681, in the 77th year of his age.†

The associated members, and notably Mr. Gouge, were very well-intentioned towards Wales, and he prosecuted his object at the expense of much personal sacrifice; still it must be confessed that they were far from fortunate in the plan they had adopted. They entered upon the work without having sufficiently studied the peculiarity of the people. The ignorance which Archbishop Tillotson has betrayed in his estimate of the geographical, or perhaps more accurately meteorological, character of the country, was only paralleled by his ignorance of the best mode of benefiting the people educationally. He speaks of the "extremity of heat and cold (which in their several seasons are both very great there)," much in the same strain as Cæsar speaks of the peculiarity of the winters in Gaul as compared with those of Rome. Something similar, was the mistake of teaching the people to read English first. The mechanical labour of teaching reading alone, was immeasurably greater than if they had begun with the Welsh and then taken up the English. And besides, no real love of literature was implanted in their minds, as they could little appreciate the thoughts of the authors. This result is plainly seen in the little hold these schools had upon the affections of the people, as not long after the death of their principal supporter, they altogether declined and vanished. It remained for a native of the Principality, fifty years after, who knew the wants and taste of the nation far better, to discover a system of schools which profoundly and permanently roused the enthusiasm of the people. That eminent benefactor was

* Phillips's "Wales," p. 260.

† Palmer's Noncon. Mem., vol. i. pp. 184-188; Neal's Hist. Pur., vol. ii. pp. 727, 729, 730.

THE REV. GRIFFITH JONES, OF LLANDDOWROR.

Taking into consideration the novelty and suitability of his plans, the amount of his labours, and his devotion to his work for so many years, he must be looked upon as at least second, if not equal, to the founder of the Welsh Sunday Schools himself. In one thing alone does he appear to fall behind him—in that his institutions did not so long survive their author. As being the originator of the system of day schools, which were revived by Mr. Charles, and which proved so helpful to the development of the Sunday Schools, well does he deserve the appellation of “The Morning Star” of the Methodistical Revival, as well as of the educational outcome of that important event. Mr. Jones was born in the parish of Cilrhedyn, Caermarthenshire, in the year 1683, and his family had been noted for many years past for their respectability and piety, among its quiet inhabitants. He lost his father when rather young, the whole care of training the child thereby devolving upon the mother. From his early youth, he is said to have evinced a great aptitude to learn, and considerable quickness of parts. Like most boys of his circumstances, he received the first rudiments of his knowledge at the schools of his immediate neighbourhood, when, after exhausting the curriculum usually supplied in such seminaries, he was removed to the grammar school at Caermarthen. Here he made an extensive acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages, although, like Timothy, he was labouring under the disadvantage of having a weak and fragile body. During his connection with school, instead of following the levity and low amusements by which many young men have often been corrupted, he used to retire to his apartment for prayer and meditation, and in this, his sober and staid demeanour was in direct contrast with that of the majority of his fellow-students. Not long after adopting this course, through reading the Bible and theological works, he felt an inclination to devote himself to the work of the ministry. In the year 1708, he was ordained deacon by the learned Bishop Bull, of St. David’s, and the following year received priest’s orders. In 1711, he was presented to the living of Llandeilo-Abercowyn, and in 1716, obtained the vicarage of Llanddowror, with which place his name has ever after been associated. Besides these two parishes, Mr. Jones used to minister occasionally at Llanllwch, near Caermarthen. Under

his ministry in this place, Miss Bridget Vaughan, of Derllysg, in the parish of Merthyr, was induced to seek a Saviour, and became a zealous co-worker with him in elevating her nation. She afterwards married Arthur Bevan, Esq., of Langharne, and under the name of Madame Bevan, her memory is sacred in the Principality as an enlightened advocate and supporter of day schools for the people.

Mr. Jones had intended at one time to go out to India as a missionary, under the patronage of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Countries; but when he found that Providence had cut out for him a field of labour in his own country, he devoted himself to the work with as much enthusiasm as if he had been engaged in what would, no doubt, have been looked upon as the more heroic undertaking, of converting the tawny-skinned Hindoos to the faith of Christ. He had been admitted a corresponding member of the Christian Knowledge Society on the 18th of June, 1713, three years before he came to live at Llanddowror, and his connection with this society in after time was of great advantage to him in carrying out his plans of benefiting the people. He has been chiefly eminent for having first started, in 1730, the circulating schools, which for many years were peculiar institutions of this country. They have been known under various names, such as *Schools of Piety*, *Catechetical Charity Schools*, *Circulating Schools*, and subsequently *Madame Bevan's Schools*. Of the two most descriptive of these epithets, one refers to the catechetical manner of instruction, the other to the temporary continuance of the schools in one place, and their circulation from place to place. About seven years after the start of the first school at Llanddowror, and when this had been succeeded by similar schools in other parishes of both North and South Wales, he published yearly reports of the schools, under the name of *Welsh Piety*. These reports continued to be issued annually between 1737 and 1760, the year before he died. The immediate result of the publicity given to the primitive character and remarkable success of the schools, was to cause the contributions of generous benefactors to flow in without solicitation, not only from Wales but also from England, which enabled their organizer to extend from year to year the sphere of their usefulness. From one of these reports, published in the year 1744, we are able to learn how the idea originated, and how the

scheme was enlarged, as written in the author's own simple and unpretentious style.

"The occasion which, through the grace of God, led gradually to the thought of them, was a catechising exercise after the second lesson in Divine service upon Saturdays before the monthly Sacrament Sundays, when several adult and elderly, as well as young people (particularly such as desired to partake of that blessed ordinance), were examined, not only in the Catechism, but also in a brief system of divinity, and discoursed with in an easy, familiar, and very serious way, about every answer they made, explaining it clearly to their understanding, and strongly applying it to their consciences. But the greatest part of those who most wanted such kind of instruction, and the application of it, stood off; being old in ignorance, they were ashamed to be thus taught and catechised publicly; while many others, after a proper and friendly way of dealing with them about it, submitted to the method willingly, and at length would not be content without it. In compassion to the poor (yet precious) souls of others, public notice was given in church on Sunday to summon them (I mean all the poor people) to come there at the same time with the rest, to receive a dole of bread, provided for them with part of the money the communicants gave at the Sacrament. Being come together, and placed orderly, in a row, to receive the bread, a few plain and easy questions were asked them, with great tenderness and caution, not to puzzle or give them cause to blush, having instructed and made private interest with the best-disposed of them beforehand to lead on and encourage the others. This being repeated once a month, the number of the elderly catechumens increased, and all came willingly, giving opportunity to proceed from easier to harder questions, and by degrees to teach them in all the plain doctrines of Christian knowledge needful to salvation, and cheerfully learning by heart two or three verses from the Holy Scriptures, as would be given them to be repeated at next catechising After many years' practice of the method above, it occurred at length to wish for Welsh Charity Schools, to instruct both the young and old ignorant people, which thereupon were attempted to be set up in some places, without any great prospect of success. But through the blessing of God, they have prospered beyond expectation to this time, for seven years past, which gave frequent opportunities for further discoveries of

the most deplorable ignorance among the poor. When they were examined at their first coming to school, they could not answer the easiest questions in religion, especially in those places where non-residence, plurality of curacies, English preaching to Welsh congregations, abound; or where there is only a sort of preaching, neither well adapted, nor so much as accompanied with a fervent desire, to illuminate and convert the blind and the wicked. And it is very amazing to consider how long and how incredibly ignorant the generality of the people have continued, even under very plain and powerful preaching, where catechising is omitted or performed without a familiar explication of its doctrine to all the people The business of the schoolmasters (of these schools) is 'to teach all the ignorant people that come to them to read the Word of God in their mother tongue; to sing a psalm, and pray with them night and morning; to instruct them twice a day in the Church Catechism, and the meaning thereof, by the help of such expositions as both masters and scholars are provided with; to talk to them about their duty to God and man, and to warn them against all, particularly the reigning, vices of the world; likewise to teach them a devout and decent behaviour in Divine worship, and to train them up to answer reverently the responses in our Divine service, and to bring their scholars to the parish church, that the minister, when he finds it convenient, may examine them publicly.' A copy of the rules is sent with every master. . . .

"Perhaps it may be suggested that it were better to set up Charity Schools for the Welsh people in the English language, which, to be sure, will be altogether as edifying as preaching English sermons to Welsh congregations, that understand no tongue but their own. Shall we be more concerned for the propagation of the English language, than the salvation of our people? Alas! must they not be taught in the things which concern their salvation till they be instructed in a language they do not as yet understand? This would be harder treatment than the common people meet with in Popish countries, who, though they have not the prayers, yet are favoured with the instructions of the church in their own language. Most of the Welsh poor, particularly the elderly people among us, will find it impossible to learn English, and very many that have been three or four years in an English school could hardly be taught to read perfectly, and could learn no more of the

language than to speak a little broken English about their common affairs, but were altogether unable to understand English books or sermons, and other religious instructions; whereas they may be taught the principles of religion, and not only to read, but likewise to understand what they read in their own British tongue, in three or four months, or sooner. Such as are able to acquire the knowledge of the English language may apply themselves, as some have done, to learn it. The Welsh Charity Schools are not in the least a hindrance, but rather a help to it, for if they learn their own language first, as all nations in the world do, they will find the difficulty less to learn another afterwards; to proceed from the easier task to a harder is the most natural method. This objection has been already very fully answered in the yearly accounts of these schools to which I must refer you, and therefore I need say no more than this, that Welsh Charity Schools are only for the Welsh poor people, that neither do nor can understand any other language. To give them English schools, must be the same thing as setting up French Charity Schools for the poor in England. It is absurd, in the very reason and nature of the thing, to set about instructing the people in religion in any other language but such as they understand.

“Your most humble servant,

“GRIFFITH JONES.”

“Llanddowror, December 24, 1744.”

From other numbers of these Reports, it is gathered that the sole object of the schools was to enable the people to read the Holy Scriptures in Welsh. The plan of the schools was for each master to remain at a particular place until a number had been taught to read, and then remove, to bring about similar results in another place; hence the meaning of the term *circulating*. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge efficiently supported the schools by donations of Bibles and thousands of other books. At times, too, assistance was given to support poor families while giving their time to attend school. All ages—children, youth, middle-aged, and old people—frequented them, and they extended, in varying numbers, to almost all the counties of Wales. By the year 1760 it is computed that there were 215 schools in active operation with numbers amounting to 8687. They were thus distributed:—

SOUTH WALES.			NORTH WALES.		
	Schools.	Scholars.		Schools.	Scholars.
Breconshire ...	4	196	Anglesea ...	25	1023
Cardigan ...	20	1153	Caernarvon ...	27	981
Caermarthen ...	54	2410	Merioneth ...	15	508
Glamorgan ...	25	872	Denbigh ...	8	307
Monmouth ...	2	61	Montgomery...	12	339
Pembroke ...	23	837			
Total	128	5529	Total	87	3158

Judge Johnes, from a careful perusal of the volumes of *Welsh Piety*, presents us with the following interesting summary and inferences:—

“In 1761, the year of Mr. Jones’s decease, that is about thirty years after the first experiment had been tried with ‘the sacrament money of the parish of Llanddowror’ (Last Letter of Griffith Jones, at the end of the third volume of *Welsh Piety*), the number of schools which had been established at different times and in various places (it should not be forgotten that a school rarely or (n)ever continued in the same place for more than half a year at a time) in Wales, amounted to 3495, and the number of scholars who had been educated in them amounted to 158,237. This was certainly a degree of success which the most sanguine friends of the institution could hardly have anticipated; we can only justly appreciate its real extent, when we recollect that the population of Wales during this period continued on an average between four and five hundred thousand. It should also be kept in mind that the number of scholars just given applies merely to those who frequented the schools in the day-time; Griffith Jones informs us that those who received tuition by the night visits of the schoolmasters were twice as numerous (*Welsh Piety*, 1st No. p. 65) a class as the regular day-scholars. Nor are these details in any respect a matter of vague conjecture, as one of the duties of the schoolmasters was to keep (Griffith Jones’ Letter in *Welsh Piety*, 1st No. p. 3) a minute account of the names, dispositions, and progresses of their pupils. Two-thirds of the regular day-scholars were adults (*Welsh Piety*, p. 65), and many instances are recorded of old men who ‘for age were obliged to wear spectacles, coming to the schools for the purpose of learning to read’ (*Welsh Piety*, p. 26); and this interesting feature of humble literary zeal is well known to have presented itself frequently in more recent times, when schools of a

similar character were founded in North Wales, by Mr. Charles of Bala, and his coadjutors. Many old persons came, and bursting into tears lamented 'that they had not had an opportunity of learning forty or fifty years sooner' (*Welsh Piety*, pp. 5, 6); and several blind persons attended during the hours of tuition, and by dint of attention to what was going on, learnt by heart several chapters of the Bible. Servants were in the habit of hiring labourers 'to serve in their room,' to enable them to frequent the schools, and afterwards of spending the long winter nights in imparting their little stock of lore to their fellow-servants; in one word, every incident in the history of these schools contributes to prove that the ignorance of the Welsh of that period was ascribable to a total want of the means of knowledge, and not to any indisposition in the people to employ them when offered." *

Mr. Jones from time to time received many testimonials from all parts of the country, expressing the value set upon them by the people, and showing how jealous they were for the good name of the schoolmasters to be vindicated against the calumnies of opponents and persecutors. One of these is presented to the reader here as a specimen of a host of others:—

Letter to Griffith Jones, on the subject of the schools, illustrating the effect of the schools in reviving religion in the Church of England.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. P. Thomas, curate of Gelligaer, Glamorganshire.

"1. Our churches in general in this neighbourhood are now near as full again of auditors as they used to be before those Welsh Charity Schools circulated about the country. Their ministers endeavoured before, both by fair and rough means, to bring the people under the droppings of the sanctuary, but all in vain, yet now (blessed be God) our solemn assemblies are thronged; and what is more to be taken notice of, there is a visible change for the better in the lives and behaviour of the people, which induces me to hope that God pours down his blessing in great abundance upon this new way (if I may so call it) of reviving religion among us. As by learning to read they are taught to see their master's will with their own eyes, as well as to hear it with the ear, it is hoped

* Johnes's "Essay," pp. 26, 27.

that the advantage they receive by both senses will doubly increase their love and affections to God and his holy ways.

“2. We have now a monthly communion about us here in several parish churches, where within very few years past it could hardly be administered so often as thrice a year, for want of persons to receive it; but (thanks be to God) I hear there are near six score monthly communicants in one of these parishes at present, viz. Eglwys Helen, where not long since they wanted a convenient number to minister the sacrament on one of the three solemn feasts of the year. I am also informed that the communicants increase monthly at Bedwas, Mynydd-islwyn, and Bedwellty, in Monmouthshire, and in several other parishes distant from me, where the schools have been for one or two quarters; and if you had been able to afford them the continuance of the schools for a longer time, it is thought that by the blessing of God the effect would have been proportionable; as we find it has been in other places, where they have been for three or four quarters.

“3. It was difficult for the poor to find fit persons, according to the excellent institution of our Church, to stand godfathers and godmothers to their children when they brought them to be baptized; as few made conscience of receiving the Lord’s supper, indeed very few could give a tolerable account of it, nor of the creed and ten commandments, nor of the very plainest principles of the Christian religion.

“4. The Welsh schools have been the means, under God, to reform the profanation of the Sabbath day; which the generality of the common people, formerly spent in tippling, gaming, etc., notwithstanding all the good laws in force against it. Many of them at present, are as fervent for the sanctification of it, as before they were in profaning it; for as *then* they assembled together for their plays and diversions without much interruption, neighbours associate *now* on the Lord’s day evening to read their Bibles or other good books, and to repeat what they remember of the instructions given them from the pulpit in the morning; singing psalms and praying with their families, which before they were taught to read they neither did nor could do. They gratefully own the light and reformation they are now blessed with, to be owing (next under God) to the charitable supporters of these schools; which they acknowledge to be the most beneficial charity that ever

could be offered towards promoting religion among the poor and ignorant, praying God to continue and prosper, and abundantly to reward the authors of it."*

Similar testimonials, or certificates as they were called, were received from Rev. Jenkin Jones, curate of Llanbadock, Monmouthshire, Rev. John Kenrick, minister of Llangernyw, Denbighshire, and also a vindication of a schoolmaster by the parishioners of Llanfihangel rhos y Corn, Caermarthenshire, dated 7th day of July, A.D. 1741.

Besides his labours as an educationist, Mr. Jones was also, in his day, the most popular and successful preacher and evangelist in the Principality. His style as a preacher was pointed, convincing, often thundering in his denunciations; as regards matter he was doctrinal and intellectual, and always supporting his ministry by a thoroughly consistent conversation. So much did his reputation as a preacher spread, that he was often asked by his neighbours to occupy their pulpits, but wherever he went he endeavoured to follow out his practice of public catechising; and this novelty would bring together so many from all parts to hear him that the churches would be too small to hold the congregations. Very often had he to adjourn to the open air, utilizing a tombstone as a vantage ground to address the thronging multitude. In time he arranged to make a kind of periodical tour through the neighbouring districts of South Wales, choosing mostly, Easter and Whitsun weeks as the most suitable seasons for his excursions. His chief object in fixing upon this time, was to come across the scenes of revelry, drunkenness and fightings, which at those festivals always abounded in all parts of the country. He was very successful in putting down these rustic carnivals. One individual who often accompanied him on his preaching tours, says that in the beginning of his address to the uproarious attendants of the feasts "he was generally received with looks of anger and churlish disdain, but the conclusion was always marked by symptoms of strong emotion and by an expression of reverence and awe from the whole assembled multitude."

Notwithstanding his vast labours in preaching, teaching and catechising, he found time to enrich the literature of his country with both original works and translations from English into Welsh. Amongst these may be enumerated his "Explanation of the Church

* Quoted in Johnes's "Essay," pp. 21, 22.

Catechism ;” “ A Call to the Throne of Grace ;” “ Directions how to come to the Throne of Grace ;” “ Forms of Prayer ;” “ A Cheap Advice ;” “ A Book on the Duty of Instructing the Ignorant ;” “ An Exhortation to Praise God ;” and “ A Collection of the Songs of the Rev. Rhys Prichard.” It has been already mentioned how he was instrumental in obtaining two editions of the Bible in Welsh, in 1746 and 1752. He was specially and directly connected with the great religious revival which commenced during his lifetime, and whose beneficial effects have been continued up to our days. For more than one reason has he deserved the title of “ The Morning Star of the Methodistical Revival.” It was under his ministry, during one of his itineracies at Llanddewibrefi, in Cardiganshire, that the Rev. Daniel Rowlands “ Offeiriad bach Llangeitho ” (The little Priest of Llangeitho), as he was called, was converted. From his school at Llanddowror, another efficient labourer in the revival, the Rev. Howell Davies went forth, who chose Pembrokeshire as his field. The wife of the Rev. William Williams, of Pantycelyn, the noted hymnologist of the Welsh, was for some time brought up in his family, she having been a lady companion to Mrs. Jones, who was a daughter of Sir Erasmus Phillips, and half-sister to Sir John Phillips, of Picton Castle, in Pembrokeshire. The effect of his teaching (for he was remarkable for his devotedness to family instruction and worship), exercised no small influence on the mind of the bard, through the medium of his wife, to whom he often refers in his songs under the familiar name of *Mali* (Mary). After serving his nation according to the will of God, he slept in Jesus at the house of his friend Madam Bevan, on the 8th of April, 1761, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and was buried in the church of Llanddowror, where he had been ministering for forty-five years. His death was greatly felt by the general public, and great weeping marked the bearing of his mortal remains to their last resting-place. In his intercourse with the people he had always been meek, earnest, kind and humble, which had greatly endeared him to all his friends and acquaintances. By his ministry he had been the instrument, through God’s spirit, to bring many a soul to a saving knowledge of the truth ; by his schools he had enabled thousands to read God’s Word in their own tongue ; and by the combined effect of the course of instruction in the schools, and his own direct appeals, he had greatly succeeded in improving the morals of the country, especially

by putting down the evil practices of sabbath-breaking, drunkenness and public rioting.

The schools were carried on after his death, under the supervision of Madam Bevan. The following table may be interesting as showing their growth and fluctuations from their commencement to the year of that virtuous lady's death :—

Statement of the number of schools established by Griffith Jones and Mrs. Bevan, and the number of scholars instructed in them from the commencement in 1737 till the death of that lady in 1777, a period of forty years.*

Schools. Scholars.			Schools. Scholars.		
In the year	1737	37 2400	In the year	1759	206 8539
"	1738	71 3981	"	1760	215 8687
"	1739	71 3989	"	1761	210 8023
"	1740	150 8767	"	1762	225 9616
"	1741	128 7995	"	1763	279 11770
"	1742	89 5123	"	1764	195 9453
"	1743	75 4881	"	1765	189 9029
"	1744	74 4253	"	1766	219 10986
"	1745	120 5843	"	1767	190 8422
"	1746	116 5635	"	1768	148 7149
"	1747	110 5633	"	1769	173 8637
"	1748	136 6223	"	1770	159 9042
"	1749	142 6543	"	1771	181 9844
"	1750	130 6244	"	1772	219 12044
"	1751	129 5669	"	1773	242 13205
"	1752	130 5724	"	1774	211 11685
"	1753	134 5118	"	1775	148 9002
"	1754	149 6018	"	1776	118 7354
"	1755	163 7015	"	1777	144 9576
"	1756	172 7064			
"	1757	220 9037			
"	1758	218 9834			
			Total	6465	314051

The prominent share which these schools had in the enlightenment of the Welsh people for so considerable a period, and the familiarity with which Madam Bevan's name is mentioned even to this day, will, we presume, render every further information respecting her charity to support the schools, its subsequent history and present application very acceptable to the reader. The former particulars have been supplied us by Sir T. Phillips. He writes respecting them :—

"Rev. Griffith Jones left at his death upwards of £7000 in the hands of his friend Madam Bevan, to be applied by her to the sup-

* Given in Judge Johnes's "Essay," p. 103.

port and extension of the circulating schools; and that lady, who died in 1779, gave the books and estate of the late Griffith Jones, and also the residue of her own estate, for the use of the Welsh Circulating Charity Schools, so long as the same should continue; and for the increase and improvement of Christian knowledge. One of the trustees of the will of Madam Bevan possessed herself of the property thus bequeathed, and, having refused to apply it for the charitable purposes directed by the will, the schools were closed for many years, pending an information by the Attorney-general; and the charity only came again into operation in 1809, since which time it has been managed under a scheme embodied in an order of the Lord Chancellor, made the 11th of July, 1807, of which the following are the principal regulations:—

“That the trustees of the charity appoint schoolmasters of competent abilities and good character (members of the Established Church), who, being approved of by the bishop of the diocese, or by some two or more clergymen named by him, shall receive salaries not exceeding £7 10s. a quarter; but no person shall be appointed a schoolmaster without conforming himself pursuant to the Act of Uniformity.

“That the trustees appoint schools at such towns, villages, and places within the Principality of Wales, as, with the concurrence of the bishop or such clergymen, they shall deem convenient.

“That the duty of the schoolmaster shall consist in teaching the children, both male and female, of poor indigent persons to read; in making them learn by heart the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Commandments, and the Church Catechism; and in going with and attending such children to the parish church on the Lord's day, and as often on other days, when Divine service shall be performed, as may be convenient.

“That the trustees appoint two fit and discreet members of the Church, to be approved of by the bishop of the diocese, at a salary not exceeding £30 a year for each, to be visitors of the schools, who shall visit and inspect every school in their district once in six months, and report on the state of the schools to the trustees and the bishop.

“That the trustees meet yearly in the town of Cardigan, on the last day of the Autumn Great Sessions for that county, to take into consideration the general state and concerns of the charity.’

"The fund now consists of £31,486 12s. 2*d.* three per cent. consols, producing a yearly income of £944 12s., which has been hitherto employed in supporting a school at Newport, in Pembrokeshire, where the schoolmasters employed by the trustees receive what is called training; in small stipends to three visitors of the circulating schools; and in salaries of £20 and £25 a year to a certain number of masters."*

With regard to the present application of the charity, the Commissioners of 1880, on the "Condition of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales," remark, "That certain charities were specially referred to (by witnesses) as capable of being made by a change in the manner of their application much more conducive than at present to the advancement of education in Wales. One of these was the charity of Bridget Bevan, originally given for the maintenance of the Welsh circulating schools set on foot in 1733 by the Rev. Griffith Jones, but now, under a scheme of the Court of Chancery, used, among other things, to subsidise elementary schools connected with the Church of England in various parts of Wales. Small payments are made to each of the aided schools, and the result is not so much to promote the education of the poor as to relieve the localities assisted of some part of the burden now cast on them by the Elementary Education Acts."†

The review now concluded brings us to the eve of the establishment of Sunday Schools. In endeavouring to gauge the real amount of good produced upon the country through the influence of the schools of the period, the particulars we have been able to furnish will show at once the difficulty of arriving at any correct estimate. The fact that considerable sums of money were left in some counties towards supplying their educational needs, is no safe indication that the object was always secured. Too often in the case of the smaller endowments, all the emoluments to all intents and purposes went to increase the clergyman's salary, who relegated the duties of instructing the youth to a less qualified person, and whose services could be secured at a small fraction of the proceeds. Even very lately did the vicar of the parish church and the head master of the school meet in the same individual, but the latter office was only a fiction of law, in order to divert the endowment from its intended application. In the larger schools, too, the children of the wealthier

* Phillips's "Wales," pp. 285, 286.

† Report, p. xxxvii.

classes would mostly, if not exclusively, be benefited. That there were private adventure schools carried on in many towns and some of the larger villages can hardly admit of a doubt; but even granting this, large tracts of the country must have been left throughout this long period in a state of profoundest ignorance. It can be safely affirmed only of the schools founded by Revs. Thomas Gouge and Griffith Jones, that they really touched the condition of the masses generally. Thus, characterizing the whole period, our description can hardly justify more than a negative statement—that the country was not altogether a land of total darkness. Even the light to which we have referred, was made up of faint streaks and occasional emissions, certainly not a generally diffused influx. The whole period may not inaptly be described in the words of the prophet, especially with reference to the bright contrast of the Sunday School period: “And there was a day—neither night nor day—but there will be light in the evening.”

CHAPTER V.

HINDRANCES AND OPPOSITIONS TO PROGRESS.

Presumptive evidence of the neglected state of the country—Direct influences at work—Neglect of duty by spiritual teachers—Dr. Meyrick, of Bangor—Dr. Hughes, of St. Asaph—State of dioceses during the reigns of James I. and Charles I.—Rev. Rhys Prichard's testimony—State of the country during the commonwealth—The ordinance for ejecting scandalous ministers—Itinerant preachers in the country—Evidence of the biographer of Charles of Bala—Of Mr. Charles himself—Sir Thomas Phillips's estimate of the period—Direct opposition to the efforts to enlighten the people—The earlier Puritans—John Penry—Persecution of good pastors by Laud—The labours of Wroth, Erbury and Walter Cradoc—Opposition to the evangelistic work of Vavasor Powell—Johnes's general conclusions—Operation of the Acts of Uniformity, the Conventicle, and Five-mile Acts—Griffith Jones of Llanddowror and his ecclesiastical superiors—His charges against his brother clergy—General effect of persecution.

THE concluding remarks of the previous chapter may have prepared the way for the coming change in the character of our remarks. Hitherto we have dwelt altogether on the bright side of the question—the efforts and immediate success, so far as it went, of good men to dispel the darkness with which they were surrounded, eliminating from our consideration all hostile influences, except the consciousness of the fact that the human heart is always averse to be acted upon for its good. But even when confining our observation to the direct influences at work for the enlightenment of the people, we are compelled to come to the conclusion that the results were but meagre and transitory. The long intervals of mental inactivity, as shown by the slow issue of Scriptures and other books from the press, throughout the whole period; the totally inadequate provisions afforded by the schools to bring the population generally under training; the necessary immediate relapse into which the

country fell, after the bright but comparatively short periods of *renaissance* brought about through the instrumentality of such men as Thomas Gouge and Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, because the efforts they originated were not continued and sustained—all these considerations, in themselves apart from all active hostilities, must point to a state of things in which, taking a general survey, the darkness must have far predominated over the light. But further influences are forced upon our notice which were directly at variance with even the meagre efforts exerted, and effectually retarding them from producing the fullest effects they were capable of, towards the improvement of the country. These hindrances to progress are comprised under two headings: (1) *Culpable dereliction of duty by those to whom the spiritual and intellectual amelioration of the people was naturally and officially entrusted*; (2) *Direct persecution of those who were labouring for their country's good by men in authority, who ought rather to have heartily co-operated with them in their labours*.

1. With regard to the former of these two hostile elements, due credit, we hope, has been and ought to have been given, to the noble array of pious, able and devoted clergymen who laboured to promote religion and encourage education among the middle and lower classes at different times; but their virtues cannot possibly atone for the multitude of sins of omission and commission which many of their brethren were guilty of in the positions they occupied. In no spirit of fault-finding or crowing over the defects of any section of the Protestant Church, do we refer to this subject, but merely in the interest of historical truth which the proper elucidation of this branch of our inquiry demands. This remissness was found to prevail more or less throughout the period, and since too often the bishops were foremost in the iniquity, the character of the majority of the subordinate clergy could not be expected to have been much different.

In 1560, Dr. Meyrick, Bishop of Bangor, states that he had only two preachers in all his diocese, and Strype, in his "Life of Archbishop Parker," speaking of the same see, in 1565, says "that there was no preaching used, and pensionary concubinage was openly continued, that is, allowance of concubinage to the clergy by paying a pension, notwithstanding the liberty of marriage granted." In the year 1587, a charge was brought against Dr. William Hughes, Bishop of St. Asaph, of misgoverning his diocese. An inquiry was instituted,

the result of which was to substantiate the following allegations:— that he himself held sixteen rich livings *in commendam*; that most of the other great livings were in possession of persons who lived out of the country; and that only three clergymen in the whole diocese resided on their livings. Only three are described as living worthily of the gospel, viz. Dr. Powell of Ruabon, Dr. William Morgan of Llanrhaiadr-yn-Mochnant, and another old clergyman, who was about eighty years of age. One redeeming trait in the character of this prelate is that he rendered material assistance in getting the Bible translated into Welsh. Archbishop Laud, in a letter addressed to the king in relation to the diocese of St. David's, incidentally, and no doubt unintentionally, throws light on the conduct of the clergy of the period. "He complains much," says the Archbishop, speaking of the Bishop of St. David's, "and surely with cause enough, that there are few ministers in those poor and remote places that are able to preach and instruct the people." In the same strain writes the Bishop of St. Asaph to his bigoted primate respecting his efforts in getting the "Book of Sports" (of which we shall have more to say in the next section) read in the churches. He says "that they were not anywhere troubled with *Inconformity* (that is a refusal to read the "Book of Sports"), but that he heartily wished they might as well be acquitted of superstition and profaneness." In the year 1641, the Long Parliament sent a number of itinerant preachers to Wales, commanding them to preach wherever there might be need. In a petition sent from Wales to the king and parliament this year, the state of religion in the country is described as being very low, that there were hardly as many faithful preachers as counties in Wales, and that very few made an open profession of religion. The Rev. Rhys Prichard of Llandoverly, referring to the state of the country between 1602 and 1646, states that "not one in a hundred of his countrymen could read; that no copy of the Scriptures was found even in the mansions of many of the gentry; that the clergy were asleep, leaving the people to wallow in their sins unwarned and unrebuked; that the upper classes, with rare exceptions, were totally regardless of religion, and the common people ignorant and unwilling to receive instruction." His own words on the subject are remarkably strong and uncompromising.

"Licentiousness," he says, "drunkenness, dishonesty, falsehood, and infidelity are rampant through the principality. Judges and

juries sympathise with drunken murderers, and permit extortioners to rob widows and orphans. Sheriffs and their deputies plunder innocent people by virtue of their offices. The Lord's Day is a day for drunkenness, dancing, idleness, games, and wanton lewdness among the Welsh."

The result of the petition above referred to, presented to the Long Parliament, was to pass an ordinance specially framed for Wales, on the 22nd of February, 1649, called "An ordinance for the better propagation and preaching the gospel in Wales; for ejecting scandalous ministers and schoolmasters, and the redress of some grievances, to continue in force for three years, from the 25th March, 1650." The charges brought against several of the clergy throughout Wales were immoral life, drunkenness, and ignorance of the principles of the Christian religion. There are some who think that these were too severely dealt with, and that they ought rather to have been warned and allowed time to reform, and not thrust altogether from their livings. Few deny the charges *in toto*, for that implies at once a spirit of persecution in the commissioners, for which no justification can be found. But even granting that their zeal for the house of the Lord carried them to extremes, after making the greatest allowances, the amount of neglect still remaining, shows the country to have been in a most deplorable state. We shall here present the facts, and leave the reader to draw the conclusions which seem to him just.

On the 17th of January, Colonel Harrison was appointed to bring in an Act for the preaching of the gospel in Wales, which was passed on the 22nd of February. It was commended to the special care of Colonel Harrison, to have some instructions considered for the direction of the commissioners as to their proceedings, under the titles of Malignancy, Delinquency, Nonresidency, and Scandal. . . . The measures taken under this ordinance had the intention of uprooting a parochial ministry in Wales, in accordance with a scheme of Hugh Peters, for propagating the gospel in that country, by sequestering all ministers, bringing the revenues of the Church into one treasury, and allowing thereout stipends of £100 a year to six itinerant ministers, to preach in each county. From another ordinance, passed on the 30th of August, 1654, for appointing commissioners to take an account of the moneys received under the former ordinance, and for securing the payment into the Exchequer

of all surplus moneys, it appears that the commissioners named in the first ordinance were empowered to receive and dispose of all the profits of all ecclesiastical livings, whether in the disposal of the Parliament, or under sequestration, and to appoint a yearly maintenance for such persons as should be recommended and appointed for the work of the ministry, or for the education of children, and for such other ministers as were then residing in the country. Before the end of 1652, between the counties of Glamorgan, Monmouth, Brecon, Cardigan, Caermarthen, Pembroke, and Radnor, there were 336 livings sequestered by the commissioners or otherwise vacated. In the same seven counties, there were livings in the hands of the commissioners in the year 1650, 273; in 1651, 292; in 1652, 209. In the same six counties, omitting Radnor, of episcopally ordained ministers existing in 1645 who retained their benefices in 1652, there were 127. On the 10th of March, 1651, a petition was presented to the Parliament from 15,000 of the inhabitants of six counties of South Wales, complaining of various sufferings inflicted by the commissioners for propagating the gospel. The committee of plundered ministers received a Report from the commissioners of their proceedings, with which they appear to have been satisfied, and further refused what the petitioners sought, namely, an examination of their allegations by a commissioner appointed to visit the country for the purpose There are entries in the sequestrators' accounts for Monmouthshire in 1650 and 1651, showing how they supplied the places of some of the ejected ministers. Thus:—

“Distributed amongst twenty godly members of the churches of Llanfaches and Mynyddislwyn, sent forth to exercise their gifts, and to help in the work of the Lord amongst the Welsh in the mountains, £340.”

That the charges against the ejected clergy were not unfounded is proved by the confessions of Rev. John Edwards, who was himself among the number. He acknowledges that at the time “not one in fifteen of his clerical contemporaries could read or write the Welsh language.” In 1677, a pious clergyman writing to his brethren says, “There are to be found in each of the Welsh dioceses from forty to sixty churches without a sermon on Sundays.” Coming down to the eve of the establishment of Sunday Schools, Mr. Morgan of Syston, himself a clergyman of the Church of England, and well known as the able biographer of Mr. Charles of

Bala, says "that the Church ministers were in a most degenerate state, both as to principles and practice, while the gentry used no influence in favour of religion or good morals, but themselves gave example of many kinds of wickedness." And Mr. Charles himself had borne testimony to the same effect, saying, "In those days the land was dark indeed; hardly any of the lower ranks could read at all. The morals of the country were very corrupt, and in this respect there was no difference between gentle and simple, laymen and clergymen. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness prevailed throughout the whole country."

Sir Thomas Phillips, who can never be suspected of dealing unjustly towards the Church of which he was so bright a member, candidly acknowledges that the clergy during this period had egregiously failed of their duty towards those whom they were entrusted to instruct. The very same causes which in later times brought about the alienation of the people from the Church of England, always entailed as one result at least, the increase of ignorance and superstition, inasmuch as the ministers of that church, for a long time, were the only instructors of the people. The simony, nepotism, non-residence, pluralism, and especially incompetence to instruct, arising from the fact that so many were holding livings who could not preach to the people in a language "understood of them," prevailing for so many years, brought about the natural results of utter contempt on the part of the people for the means of grace as dispensed within the walls of the establishment, and the consequent relapse, not so much into infidelity, as into superstition and immorality. The various influences by which the Church in Wales has been weakened, and most of the malpractices of the clergy, especially those which affected the moral and intellectual condition of the people, are thus summarised by him:—"We have found," he says, "the ecclesiastical rulers of this clergy and chief pastors of the people, as well as many other holders of valuable church preferment, to consist often of strangers to the country, ignorant alike of the language and character of the inhabitants, by many of whom they are regarded with distrust and dislike; unable to instruct the flock committed to their charge, or to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, or to preach the word, or to withstand and convince gainsayers in the language familiar to the common people of the land."

2. With regard to the second class of influences at work militating against the intellectual, social and religious advancement of the people, we have specified as chief the direct persecution of men labouring with this object in view, by those who ought rather to have been but too glad to co-operate with them. And here the picture of intolerance and malevolence is far sadder and more pitiable than the neglect of duty from which we now turn. In some cases, probably, the persecutors, like Saul of Tarsus, believed they were doing service to God by enforcing their convictions, *nolens volens*, on all with whom they came in contact. Others again thought that adherence to existing rules and regulations was to be insisted upon, however much that was at variance with the moral regeneration of the country; while most of the persecutors, it is to be feared, if ever they troubled their minds with any reflecting thought, must have prided themselves on being the direct agents of the Prince of Darkness to extend and perpetuate his rule over mankind. How much higher would the country have stood in knowledge, virtue and religion, if, like Moses, who wished that all his brethren were prophets provided some good came out of their inspiration, they also, had encouraged and not persecuted those who had at heart the advancement of their countrymen; and how much wiser would it have been for bishops, clergy, and gentry generally, before hurling their weapons of opposition against good and patriotic men, to have acted the counsel of Gamaliel, and consider whether they were not in danger of finding themselves ere long to have been, from the commencement, fighting against God.

The resistance habitually and strenuously offered by those in power to the efforts of others to enlighten and improve the people continued over the three different periods corresponding to the three different phases of its manifestation. These phases are, *the opposition shown* (1) *to the Puritans*, (2) *to the Nonconformists*; and (3) *to the Methodists*, immediately before the rise of Sunday Schools. The first as well as the most prominent of the Puritans, labouring for the good of the Principality, but who fell under the displeasure of those in authority, was a native of Breconshire,

JOHN PENRY (born about 1559).

He was brought up first at Cambridge, and afterwards at Oxford, where he gained a respectable position, for he preached with ap-

probation before the two universities. Returning to Wales, he exercised his gifts here, and according to his own showing was the first who publicly preached to the Welsh, and scattered the good seed among the hills of his native country about the year 1588. Feeling intensely for the neglected state of his "dear" native country (as he calls it), he published two books setting forth his grievance with regard to it. The first is entitled, "A survey of the public defects and disorders in Wales, with a public petition to Parliament to reform the same." The second is "An Exhortation to the Governors and the people of Wales to strive earnestly to get the Gospel preached amongst them." Not long after this the series of libels against the bishops and episcopacy, known as *Martin Mar-prelate*, were issued. These were printed at a movable press, which was shifted to different parts of the country as the pursuit grew hot. They contained little serious arguments, and must be characterized as the unwarrantable invectives of angry men who stuck at no calumny to blacken those in authority. The authors (for many are believed to have had a share in their production) could not be traced with certainty, but strong suspicion fell upon Penry, and a warrant from the Privy Council was issued in 1590, for his apprehension, as an enemy to the State. When he heard this he fled into Scotland and remained there in concealment for nearly three years. While there, he wrote many notes for his own private use on matters appertaining to religion, and also drew up a Petition to be sent to the Queen to show her the true state of religion, and how ignorant she was of the abuses practised in the Church of England, especially in the disposal of ecclesiastical patronage. In this petition a special request was made that he should be authorized to go down to Wales, his native country, and preach the gospel to his fellow countrymen. With this petition in his pocket, he made his way towards London, intending to present it to the Queen with his own hand whenever a suitable opportunity might occur. When he came, however, to the neighbourhood of the metropolis, in May, 1593, he was apprehended; and from these unpublished notes, not from what had appeared in *Martin Mar-prelate*, an accusation was drawn up against him. He was arraigned under the Act of 23 Eliz. ch. 2, for writing seditious matter against the Queen's Majesty. The Act was evidently strained beyond its intended scope, for the writings charged against

him being confined to subjects of religious controversy or of ecclesiastical discipline, he was not within the compass of a statute passed for the protection of the royal person and authority. Although this argument was submitted on his behalf, it was of little avail, as state prisoners in those days had very little chance of escaping from the clutches of the law, except by the death of the reigning monarch, whatever defence might be offered in their favour. He was found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged like a felon, Archbishop Whitgift being the first to sign the warrant for his execution.

Penry made a pathetic protestation of his innocence, asking in a letter addressed to Lord Treasurer Burghley on the 22nd of May, 1593, that it should be submitted to the Queen. This document is worthy of preservation both for its dignified and tender style, as well as being a true indication of the character of the accused. In it he says :

“I am a poor young man, born and bred in the mountains of Wales. I am the first since the springing of the Gospel in this latter age that publicly laboured to have the blessed seed thereof sown in those barren mountains. I have often rejoiced before my God, as he knoweth, that I had the favour to be born and live under Her Majesty for the promoting this work. In the earnest desire I had to see the Gospel planted in my native country, and the contrary corruptions removed, I might well, as I confess in my published writings, with Hegetorides the Thracian, forget mine own danger, but my loyalty to my Prince did I never forget. And being now to end my days before I am come to one half of my years in the likely course of nature, I leave the success of these my labours unto such of my countrymen as the Lord is to raise up after me for the accomplishing of that work, which, in the calling of my country unto the knowledge of Christ’s blessed Gospel, I began. I never took myself for a rebuker, much less for a reformer of states and kingdoms. Far was that from me, yet in the discharge of my conscience, all the world was to bear with me, if I preferred the testimony which I was bound to yield unto the truth of Jesus Christ, before the favour of any creature. The standing of the State, Kingdom, and Prince, was always most dear unto me, as He knoweth by whom States are preserved and princes do bear rule. The beginning of Her Majesty’s reign I never saw,

and beseech the Lord that no creature may see the end of her prosperity. An enemy unto any good order and policy, either in church or commonwealth, was I never. All good learning, and knowledge of the arts and tongues, I laboured to attain unto, and to promote unto the uttermost of my power. Whatsoever I wrote in religion, the same I did simply for no other end than for the bringing of God's truth to light. I never did anything in this cause (Lord thou art witness) for contention, vain glory, or to draw disciples after me, or to be accounted singular. Whatsoever I wrote or held, beside the warrant of the written word, I have always warned all men to leave it. And wherein I saw that I had erred myself, I have, as all this land doth now know, confessed my ignorance, and framed my judgment and practice according to the truth of the Word. Notwithstanding that this be prejudicial to my public writings, yea and life, the like am I ready to do in anything which I hold beside the truth at this hour. That brief confession of my faith and allegiance unto the Lord and Her Majesty, written since my imprisonment, and delivered to the worshipful Mr. Justice Young, I take, as I shall answer before Jesus Christ and the elect angels, to contain nothing but God's eternal verity in it, and therefore, if my blood were an ocean sea, and every drop thereof were a life unto me, I would give them all, by the help of the Lord, for the maintenance of the same, my confession. Yet if any error can be showed therein, that will I not maintain. Otherwise, far be it that either the saving of an earthly life, the regard which in nature I ought to have to the desolate outward state of a poor friendless widow, and four poor fatherless infants, whereof the eldest is not above four years old, which I am to leave behind me, or any other outward thing, should enforce me, by the denial of God's truth contrary unto my conscience, to lose mine own soul, the Lord, I trust, will never give me over unto this sin. Great things in this life I never sought for, not so much as in thought. A mean and base outward state, according to my mean condition, I was content with. Sufficiency I have had with great outward troubles, but most contented I was with my lot. And content I am, and shall be, with my undeserved and untimely death, beseeching the Lord that it be not laid unto the charge of any creature in this land. For I do, from my heart, forgive all those that seek my life, as I desire to be forgiven in the day of

strict account, praying for them as for mine own soul, that, although upon earth we cannot accord, we may yet meet in heaven, unto our eternal comfort and unity, where all controversies shall be at an end. And if my death can procure any quietness unto the Church of God, and unto the state of my Prince, and her kingdom, wherein I was born, glad I am that I had a life to bestow in this service; I know not to what better use it could be employed if it were reserved; and therefore, in this cause I desire not to spare the same. Thus have I lived towards the Lord and my Prince, and thus mean I to die, by his grace. Many such subjects I wish unto my Prince, though not such reward unto any of them. My only request, being also as earnest as possible, I can utter the same unto all those, both honourable and worshipful, unto whose hands this my last testimony may come, is, that Her Majesty may be acquainted herewith, before my death if it may be, or at least after my departure. Subscribed with the heart and the hand which never devised or wrote anything to the discredit or defamation of my Sovereign Queen Elizabeth (I take it on my death, as I hope to have a life after this) by me,

“JOHN PENRY.”

Hallam characterizes his trial, as well as that of Udal, another Puritan minister who was condemned for an alleged libel on the bishops, and most of the other political trials of the age, as “disgracing the name of English justice.”* His protestation above quoted, he describes as being “in a style of the most simple and affecting eloquence, in striking contrast to the coarse abuse for which he suffered.” Whether he was concerned in the production of Martin Mar-prelate has never been ascertained, but that he was a man of culture and learning, as well as of an earnest and heroic spirit, full of unbounded zeal in the cause of his own native country’s enlightenment, is unmistakably proven. Had the rulers of the Church given him every facility for labouring in that part of the vineyard for which his heart yearned, instead of damping his ardour and imprisoning him for only a conceivable offence, he might have been the instrument for accomplishing an incalculable amount of good. But rather than that, as soon as this phantom of a trial was over, without allowing him to speak a word to the people, or to make a confession of his faith in God, and his alle-

* Hallam’s “History of England,” vol. i. p. 206.

giance to the Queen, about five o'clock in the evening of the 29th of May, 1593, his life was brought to a premature end at St. Thomas Waterings, on the Southwark side of the Thames, in the thirty-eighth year of his age.

Puritanism in the reign of Elizabeth was chiefly manifested in the opposition made by those known under this appellation, to the Romish practices still allowed to linger in the Church of England, and to the episcopal form of Church government wherever found; in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. it was mostly shown in the refusal to read the Book of Sports in the churches, after divine service on Sundays. The declaration made by James in 1618, exhorting all the people except the Roman Catholics, to indulge in all sorts of games—dancing, jumping, shooting—after divine service was renewed at the instigation of Archbishop Laud, by Charles, in 1633. Though the most earnest men in the country, including many gentlemen and the judges, heartily disapproved of this profanity sanctioned by royal and ecclesiastical arrogance, some going so far as to petition the king for the sake of the honour of religion and the good of the country to discontinue this exercise of authority, the king and Laud, as if in defiance of both human and divine laws, added to the decree of James a clause commanding the civil officers not to hinder or disturb the people in their amusements, and renewing the mandate that all clergymen should announce the order of the sports after divine service. Many in consequence of this declaration, in order to preserve a clear conscience, left the Church at once, and cast their lot with the Puritans. Others, though remaining in the Church, neglected the king's behest, judging that they showed greater respect to him as their civil and ecclesiastical head, by refusing to obey him in this matter. Others, again, read the declaration as instructed, and then to smooth their consciences added, "So you have heard what man commands, now hear what God commands," and then read the fourth commandment. One witty priest, after reading the "Book of Sports," is said to have added, "I do not believe that the king intended you should thus behave, but that he rather proves you; he shows that like your old mother, you have a predilection for the forbidden fruit, and so because you do not keep the Sabbath when commanded to do it, he expects you will, when he commands you not to do it."

The very clergymen who were most zealous in their efforts to instruct their hitherto benighted and neglected flocks, were also most decidedly opposed to the reading of the "Book of Sports"; but it was against these that the bishops of the several Welsh dioceses, at the instigation of their primate, directed a system of ruthless persecution. The archbishop, recounting the faithfulness of these bishops in a letter addressed to the king which is still extant, boasts of their vigorous measures in driving beyond the pale of the Church those "who preached schismatically and dangerously to the people." He further states that they put down every species of "Inconformity," by which he meant not "Nonconformity," in the sense it came to be used after the Restoration, and with reference to the Act of Uniformity, but simply a refusal to read the "Book of Sports." These are now generally known as the early dissenters, being thus distinguished from the Nonconformists dating from the reign of Charles II. Many of these men are respectfully and gratefully remembered by their countrymen; the example of their faith and patience has sustained many a fainting worker in later times, and the seed which they sowed as it were amid the tears of persecution is now looked upon in connection with the rich and abundant harvest which it produced, while the very names of their assailants have been forgotten, and the work in which they ingloriously exulted is now only mentioned to be deprecated and condemned. Some of the most prominent of these pioneers of the missionary spirit in Wales deserve from us somewhat more than a passing remark. The first in order of time was

MR. WROTH OF LLANFACHES.

The place of his birth is not known, though some maintain that this honour belongs to the parish of Llanelen, near Abergavenny. He was educated in Oxford, where he graduated M.A. In the year 1620, he was presented to the living of Llanfaches, Monmouthshire, by the kindness of Sir William Lewis of the Fân, near Caerphilly, one of the ancestors of the founder of the Gelligaer charity.* It is said that he was about fifty years of age before he began to feel anything serious in the matter of his soul's welfare, and which

* See p. 79. The pedigree of this family may be seen in a very interesting volume by G. T. Clark of Dowlais, "A Description of the Castles of Kidwelly and Caerphilly," pp. 34, 68.

was brought about in this wise : Mr. Wroth was always very fond of music and was accustomed after the morning service to play on an instrument in the churchyard, to the great delight of his parishioners. After following this practice for many years, an incident happened which entirely checked it at once, and was the occasion of giving a new tone to the whole remainder of his life. A friend of his, a respectable man in the neighbourhood, with whom he lodged, was called up to London as a party to a law-suit in which he was interested. The case having been decided in his favour, in order to celebrate the event when he should come home, he purchased a new harp for the vicar, in whose company he promised himself much merriment and joviality. The day for his return had been appointed ; great were the preparations for his reception, the vicar leading in the arrangements for the sports of the day. But when all things were ready for the demonstration, the news reached the village that he had died on the road, and the rejoicings were at once changed into bitter lamentation. Mr. Wroth was deeply affected at the news, and the Lord blessed it to the conversion of his soul. From that day forward he began to meditate on the uncertainty of life, the value of the soul, and the great importance of the things which appertain to the eternal world. The inconsistency of his life as a minister of the Gospel flashed upon his conscience, and the general result of the whole was a complete change in his life and conversation.

With the anxiety for his own salvation, the lamentable state of his parishioners, and the benighted condition of the country at large, began to press upon his mind, and soon, in addition to reading the usual lessons on Sunday in a more impressive manner, he supplemented them with a sermon, though at first, no doubt, with great difficulty, owing to his inexperience in the work. This, together with the effect of his doctrine, caused his fame to spread much abroad. Many from distant parts came to hear him ; so great was the congregation at times, that he had to leave the church and preach in the graveyard. They came to hear him from the counties of Brecon, Glamorgan, and Gloucester, yea, even from Bristol and London, so far had the work done by the Lord through him been noised abroad. Sir Lewis Mansel of Margam, a gentleman of high position and reputation, was often among his hearers. Not only was he the means himself of turning many from darkness

into light, but many other successful labourers in the vineyard were called through his ministry, the most eminent of whom was Walter Cradoc.

This course of usefulness did not long continue unchecked. The "Book of Sports" was now the great stumbling-block to all churchmen who feared God. He also received the mandate to read it after Divine service, and for refusing, a writ was issued, summoning him before the High Commission Court. It is not known what verdict was given upon his conduct by that court, but a conversation which he had with Dr. Theophilus Field, the Bishop of Llandaff, respecting his insubordination to the higher powers and his wonderful style of preaching, has been preserved. In answer to the charges, he is said to have burst into tears, saying, "There are immortal souls hurrying into perdition in their sins, and ought I not, through the means most likely to be effectual, to try to save them?" This so affected the bishop that he also wept. The end, however, was to turn Mr. Wroth from his living. He afterwards preached secretly in his old neighbourhood, and the people whom he succeeded to gather together were, about the year 1639, formed into the first dissenting church in that part of the kingdom. Mr. Walter Cradoc testified in his sermon before the Parliament that there were at that time over eight hundred souls in this congregation thoroughly awakened to the welfare of their souls. Llanfaches was the mother church of dissenters in South Wales in those days. Many coming from far to the services, it was his custom to entertain all at his table of a Sunday. When the viands had been arranged thereon, he asked a blessing on the repast and then addressed his guests:—"Good food has been provided for you, and it is a good God that has given it; eat, and welcome." Then he would retire to his room until the afternoon service. He died about the year 1640, and, according to his own request, his body was laid to rest under the threshold of Llanfaches church. This was the first instance of a secession or rather expulsion from the Established Church in Wales, but which exactly a century after was repeated in greater force, and it has been a special feature of the ecclesiastical history of the country during the last two centuries. About the same time as Mr. Wroth, another special object of Laud's persecution was

WILLIAM ERBURY.

He was a native of Glamorganshire, and had been brought up at Oxford. Some time after leaving college he was appointed vicar of St. Mary's, Cardiff, where he successfully ministered in godly things for many years. About the year 1630 he was summoned to Lambeth Palace to answer before the Archbishop for refusing to read the "Book of Sports." He fell under the primate's displeasure, and was turned out of his living, after which he went about preaching wherever he found an opportunity. For many years after this trial he went about the country doing good, and was the means of starting the first dissenting cause at Cardiff. He died in the year 1654. Labouring as a curate under Mr. Erbury at the time of the refusal to read the "Book of Sports" was

WALTER CRADOC.*

He also came under the same ban as his master, being prohibited to preach and deprived of his curacy. Mr. Cradoc was a native of Trefela, in the parish of Llangwm, near Llanfaches, in Monmouthshire. The time of his birth is not known, but is conjectured to have been about the year 1600, or shortly after. His conversion, under the ministry of Mr. Wroth, has been already mentioned. So great was the esteem in which he held his spiritual father that he used to call him, "The Apostle of South Wales." After having been deprived of his curacy at Cardiff, he travelled through the counties of Brecknock, Radnor, and Montgomery, eventually settling down as a pastor of a church at Wrexham. He was eminently successful in his labours here, and among his converts was Mr. Morgan Llwyd of *Gwynedd*, as he was called, who became the pastor of Mr. Cradoc's church after he left. The enemies of true religion were roused against him and his flocks in the neighbourhood of Wrexham; and until very lately a man somewhat above the ordinary level in Christian virtues, was known in those parts as a *Cradockian*. This cause at Wrexham was the first dissenting Church in North Wales.

* This eminent man's name is variously spelt, by some Caradoc, by others Craddocke; we have adopted the shorter form, *Cradoc*. The Romanized form, according to Rhys's *Celtic Britain* (p. 280), was Caratacus, but which he spells, Caratacos.

From Wrexham Mr. Cradoc removed to St. Mary Waterdine, in Herefordshire, where the same divine blessing attended his ministry as heretofore. Here Mr. Vavasor Powell had the opportunity of hearing him, and although he had been impressed by the truth before, his intercourse with the reformer was greatly blessed for his further enlightenment and confirmation. From Herefordshire Mr. Cradoc returned to his native county, where he laboured in conjunction with Mr. Wroth until the latter's death, when the charge of all the churches in the district fell to his share, but he was not without many coadjutors.

In the year 1643, we find him in the city of Bristol, for he was among the besieged there when it was taken by the royal army under the command of Princes Rupert and Maurice. When the besieged were brought out through the city gates, it is said that Mr. Cradoc escaped the hostile notice of the two princes who were standing by, through the ingenuity of a certain Welshman in the king's army, Roger Watkin, who knew him. When coming through the gates his countryman accosted him in his homely brogue, "Wat, Chwat, where be thy knapsack?" which caused the princes to burst into laughter, and the poor preacher escaped unnoticed. From Bristol he probably returned into Monmouthshire, where he continued to labour until 1647, when we find him appearing in London. He was sent for to the metropolis by Oliver Cromwell, who had probably heard of his preaching powers, and especially of the great revival of religion under his ministry. He was appointed preacher at the church of All Hallows the Great, and also one of the "*Triers*," whose duty was to examine those who offered themselves as preachers and to decide upon their qualifications. Many of the sermons which he delivered in London have been published, which testify to his eminent gifts, his zeal, and his simple evangelical doctrine. In the summer of 1659, he returned to his old friends in Wales, intending after a short sojourn to resume his connection with London. But on his journey thither he heard of the probable restoration of Charles II., and therefore he retraced his footsteps to Wales, where he died in peace on Christmas-day, 1659, and was buried with Mr. Wroth at Llanfaches. Another bright star of this constellation of early reformers, and who experienced more than an ordinary share of opposition in his praiseworthy labours, was

VAVASOR POWELL.

When he began to go about preaching, the quarrel between the Long Parliament on the one hand, and the king and bishops on the other was at its height. Those ministers who had left the communion of the Church of England because they could not conscientiously approve of many of the rites and practices inculcated by their superiors were bitterly persecuted in their efforts to spread the Gospel, the ostensible plea being that they preached in unconsecrated places. Mr. Vavasor Powell was specially signalled out for a harassing course of opposition. He was a native of Radnorshire, was brought up at Oxford, and after being ordained, was a curate for some time for his uncle, Erasmus Powell. Having on one occasion been led to hear Walter Cradoc preach, he found that the principles and practices of the Puritans were more in accordance with the Scriptures than those of the party with whom he had hitherto been allied, and therefore he cast his lot with them. This was at once a sufficient disqualification for his being permitted to preach in the churches, and consequently he held services in any edifice which might be placed at his disposal, thereby incurring the hatred of his more fastidious brethren, and placing his life in imminent jeopardy. Whilst preaching in a house in Breconshire about ten o'clock at night, in the year 1640, he and about fifty of his hearers were apprehended and locked up in the parish church until the morning. In the course of the day they were brought before the magistrate, who delivered them to the charge of the police officer. The day after, the magistrate having called to his assistance two lay justices and six clergymen, ordered Mr. Powell and his fellow-prisoners to be brought before the bench, when, after interrogating and threatening them, all the while assuming their guilt, he dismissed them from the court. Not long after, Mr. Powell was again taken up by order of the high sheriff while preaching in an open field in Radnorshire, and committed to the charge of sixteen constables to be conveyed to prison. These all, except one, refused to carry out the sheriff's order, and that one allowed Mr. Powell to lodge for the night in his own (the prisoner's) house, which was on the way. When, on the following morning, he heard Mr. Powell pray so earnestly with his family, he was so troubled in his mind that he returned home, leaving the prisoner a free man

in his own house. Mr. Powell, however, lest the policeman should be implicated for deserting his charge, of his own accord appeared at the next quarter sessions of the county. Being put to his trial he was honourably acquitted, and he so impressed his judges in his favour, that they invited him with them to dinner. This incident was the occasion of furthering the good cause in that district for a time, but the high sheriff was so annoyed at the issue of the trial that he determined to drive his victim out of that part.

In the year 1646 a short lull happened in the storm which had been raging now for some time between the king and the Parliament, and Mr. Powell, with some other Puritan ministers who had been obliged to flee to England at the beginning of the civil war, returned to Wales and began to go about to preach as before. So great were this good man's energy and zeal that he often preached twice and three times a day, seldom spending two days of the week without being engaged in active duty. Very often he travelled a hundred miles a week, preaching everywhere he found an opportunity. He preached at fairs and markets, on mountain sides and remote villages; and God so prospered his utterances that thousands believed and turned to the Lord. He was imprisoned no less than thirteen times, and at last died in prison in the year 1670, in the fifty-third year of his age, having lingered there for eleven years. He is described as a man of most thorough uprightness, most fervent piety, and fearless courage. He finished his course in joy, and was allowed to be buried in the Nonconformist burial place at Bunhill Fields, London. We cannot better summarize the doings of these pious and devoted men than in the words of Judge Johnes. "In the time of the Stuarts," he remarks, "dissent from the Episcopal Church became once more an object of persecution; but the ministers of the Welsh Nonconformists still continued to traverse the wild hills of the Principality, braving all dangers for the sake of their few and scattered followers. Their congregations still occasionally met, but it was in fear and trembling, generally at midnight or in woods and caverns, amid the gloomy recesses of the mountains." *

This brings us to notice briefly the opposition shown in their labour of love to those ministers in Wales who were ejected from their livings through the operation of the Act of Uniformity which was put in force

* "Essay on the Causes of Dissent," p. 10.

on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. By this Act every minister was required to conform in all things with the service of the Established Church, to sign the Thirty-nine Articles, and to declare his consent and assent to all things contained in the new edition of the Book of Common Prayer. About two thousand left the Church throughout the kingdom rather than conform to the requirements of the Act. The term "Nonconformists" had its origin in this secession. Many of these clergymen belonged to Wales, but a greater proportion to South than North Wales. By these ejections many large congregations were left without pastors, and many a district in consequence became enveloped in darkness and immorality. Though many of these ministers were willing and anxious to preach for nothing, not only was this privilege refused them, and also that of keeping a school, but the utmost rigour of the law was inflicted upon them for daring to attempt either. Their ardour to do good was also checked by many other tyrannical and iniquitous laws, such as the Conventicle Act, passed in 1664, and the Five-mile Act, passed in 1665. By the former, every one above the age of sixteen who should be present at any religious meeting not held in a consecrated place, where five persons besides the family should be present, was for the first offence to suffer three months' imprisonment or pay five pounds; for the second offence, six months' imprisonment or ten pounds fine; for the third, seven years' transportation or pay one hundred pounds: and if he should return or escape he was to suffer death. According to the latter, every minister was required to swear that he would never propose any change in the arrangements of the Church or the State. If any refused to take this oath, they were not to come within five miles of any city or borough, or of any place they formerly preached or kept a school in, under a penalty of forty pounds. Many of the ejected ministers were imprisoned from time to time, and hampered in all manner of ways in their efforts to benefit their countrymen. We have already seen how Mr. Gouge, though licensed to preach occasionally in Wales, was persecuted from place to place; and it is pitiable to find that just in proportion to one's zeal to advance his country's good, and the greater the probability for that zeal to be crowned with success, the more was the bitterness with which the law was enforced to obstruct and punish them by those to whom the majesty of the law was entrusted. Dr. Calamy tells us

that among many others, Mr. Stephen Hughes, who has already been described as a man of the most inoffensive manners and unbounded benevolence, fell under the displeasure of "the conservators of the sacred keys who passed the censures of the Church upon him, and delivered him to the secular power, who confined him to a close prison in Caermarthen, to the prejudice and hazard of his life."

This persecution was carried on with unabated zeal until the death of Charles II.; for we find that in 1681, godly Phillip Henry was apprehended for worshipping God otherwise than according to the rites of the Established Church. He was fined £20, and because he would not pay the fine, thirty-three loads of corn which he had just cut, with hay, coals, and other things, were distrained. The master of the house in which Mr. Henry preached was also compelled to pay £20, and each of the hearers five shillings. A warrant was issued to apprehend the Rev. James Owen, of Oswestry, for a similar offence, but by keeping within his house he evaded the track of his pursuers. Though the laws against Nonconformists became less harsh in the reigns of Anne and William, the petty annoyances to which they were submitted scarcely relaxed. Opposition to all labours of love, except to those carried on in conformity to certain rules and regulations, was vigorously kept up, even against those who were recognized ministers of the Church of England. This is clearly shown in the case of Griffith Jones of Llanddowror. From none of the Welsh bishops, and from very few of the clergy, did he receive any encouragement to persevere in the work to which he was so much devoted, and which he saw crowned with such signal success. He is said to have suffered persecution for twenty years in the ecclesiastical court, because he dared to preach out of his own parish and in unconsecrated places. With regard to the attitude maintained by the clergy generally towards the labours of Griffith Jones, Judge Johnes remarks, "how, notwithstanding the zealous support afforded to him by a large portion of the clergy, there can be no difficulty in affirming that he must have met with quite as much opposition from another portion of his brethren; in those days many of the higher classes were systematically opposed to the education of the poor; a few of the Welsh clergy (though, I trust, but a few) are so even yet. He unequivocally intimates in one of his letters, that the bishops of

Wales had not even countenanced his measures (*Welsh Piety* for 1741, p. 29). Alluding to the various discouragements and vexatious calumnies to which he had been exposed, he adds, with much feeling and eloquence, 'the temple work, it seems, must be carried on still with a weapon of defence in one hand, as well as with a building instrument in the other.' *

The apology which he has written for the conduct of the dissenters of his days, and up to that time, in leaving the communion of his own Church, indirectly reflects on the shortcomings of his brethren with regard to their duty towards the people. "I must also," he says, "do justice to the dissenters of Wales, and will appeal for the truth of it to all competent witnesses and to all those themselves who separate from us, that it was not any scruple of conscience about the principles or orders of the Established Church that gave occasion to scarce one in ten of the dissenters of this country to separate from us at first, whatever objections they may have afterwards imbibed against conforming. No, sir, they generally dissent at first for no other reason than for want of plain, practical pressing and zealous preaching, in a language and dialect they are able to understand, and freedom of friendly access to advice about their spiritual state. . . . The people will not believe that there is anything in reason, law, or gospel that should oblige them to starve their souls to death for the sake of conforming, if their pastor (whose voice perhaps they do not know, or who resides a great way from them) will not vouchsafe to deal out unto them the bread of life." †

It was said at the commencement of this section that the third phase of opposition made by those in power was to the efforts of the Methodists immediately before the advent of brighter days, under the auspices of Sunday Schools. These institutions being the undoubted offspring of the Methodist revival, whatever opposition may be further taken note of, will be treated in connection with this plant, and the nursery in which it was reared. Suffice it here to say, in conclusion, that although hindrances and oppositions most often only stir up true worth and mettle into greater efforts, and that as a rule every good cause has eventually been more benefited than injured by the persecutions to which it has been subjected, nevertheless the words of our Saviour are always true,

* Johnes's "Essay," p. 29. † *Welsh Piety* for 1741, pp. 12, 13.

“Woe to them through whom offences come.” So here, whatever good was overruled by the inscrutable providence of God to result from the persistent efforts put forth for so many years to stifle the aspirations of noble souls for the moral regeneration of their fellow beings, such conduct, even when most charitably estimated, can only be characterized as narrow, selfish, and intolerant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RISE OF METHODISM, AND EARLY YEARS OF MR. CHARLES.

Mr. Henry Richard's testimony with regard to the influence of the Methodist revival on Wales—State of the country immediately before the rise of Methodism—Dr. Rees's estimate of the labours of the earlier Nonconformists—Other writers' estimate—Descriptions of the state of the country at the time, by contemporaries—Connection between the revival and intellectual progress of the people—Peculiar phases of the revival—A simultaneous beginning at two different places—Howell Harris and Daniel Rowlands—Distinct from the English Methodist revival—Reluctance to leave the Established Church—Opposition encountered—Persecutions and internal discords—Mr. Charles's early years—At school—In college—Serving his curacies—Marriage—Failing to obtain employment within the Church—Mental struggle in leaving the Establishment and joining the Methodists—Final step taken—Speedy promise of special usefulness.

THE able and eloquent author of the "Letters on the Social and Political Condition of Wales," observes that "the real awakening of the soul of the nation must be traced to the great religious revival under the Methodists about the middle of the eighteenth century, for which, however, there had been long and patient preparation, not always sufficiently acknowledged, in the quiet labours for a century and a half before of other bodies of Nonconformists. Still, that certainly was the movement which to the country at large was as life from the dead, and lifted the great mass of the people for the first time into the enjoyment of something like a moral and spiritual education; and from that time light and knowledge have gone on steadily diffusing themselves in an ever-widening circle."*

There are different opinions as to the true strength and condition of Nonconformity in Wales at the beginning of the Methodist

* "Letters," etc., by Henry Richard.

revival. Dr. Rees, in his laborious work on "The History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," takes the most hopeful view. From returns made by Dr. John Evans, about the year 1715, and still preserved in Dr. Williams's library in London, in which an account is given of fifty-eight places of worship—in four columns, the first containing the name of the place; the second, the minister; the third, the average attendance; and the fourth the social and political standing of the attendants—Dr. Rees draws the following inferences: "It will be observed," he says, "that returns of the average number of hearers have been received from only 58 of the places or pastoral charges named, and that the aggregate amount of these is 20,007, or about 345 for each charge. By estimating the other 13 which made no returns, at 345 each, which would be rather below than above the mark, the aggregate number would amount to 24,485. To this number again at least 3000 should be added as the average of the attendants at the Meeting of Friends, who were then comparatively numerous and influential in several parts of the Principality; thus the total would amount to 27,485. But as it is an admitted rule in estimating the number of persons belonging to any place of worship, to regard the number of actual attendants at any ordinary service, as only a little more than one-half of the people who consider such a place of worship as their own, we may safely calculate that *fifty thousand*, or about one-eighth of the population of Wales in 1715, were Nonconformists."*

Other writers are not so sanguine in their estimates. Sir T. Phillips, reviewing the progress of dissent in Wales from the time of the ejection of scandalous ministers by the Long Parliament to the time of the accession of George II., in 1727, remarks—

"Although the churches were unsupplied, there yet seem to have arisen but few dissenting congregations. In 1649, a Baptist congregation was founded at Ilston, in Glamorganshire, by two natives of Wales, who were baptized in London; and this congregation at Ilston is said to have been the first which admitted none to fellowship who had not received adult baptism, the dissenting communities before founded being of mixed communion. This congregation removed from Ilston to Swansea. In 1649 a Baptist congregation was founded at Llanharan, in the same county, which was removed to Llantrisant, and afterwards to Hengoed, in the

* Rees' "Nonconformity in Wales," p. 292.

parish of Gelligaer. In 1650, the congregations of Ilston and Llanharan, with a Baptist congregation at Clodock, in Herefordshire, said to have been founded in 1633, met in association at Ilston, and yearly meetings of the Baptist congregations in the Principality took place certainly up to 1656, and probably to 1660. In 1656, a letter, dated 12th of 4th month, was addressed by Dublin Baptists, "To the Churches at Ilston and Llantrisant." The growth of Baptist congregations was slow in the Principality, and at the Revolution there seem to have been only six; in 1700, nine; at the accession of George II., thirteen; and at the accession of George III., eighteen. The progress of other dissenting congregations cannot be shown with the same certainty, but it was ascertained by Mr. Neal, the historian of the Puritans, that soon after the death of Queen Anne there were in England, excluding Monmouthshire, 1099 dissenting congregations, whereof 245 were Baptists; in Monmouthshire, eight, whereof two were Baptists; in the six counties of South Wales, thirty-four; and in the six counties of North Wales, nine, including all denominations. It was estimated at that time that the Presbyterian dissenters in England and Wales exceeded, in number of congregations and members, the aggregate of all the other denominations; and that the Independent congregations and members were rather more numerous than the Baptists; but what has now become of the once powerful Presbyterian congregations? In 1719, soon after the Arian controversy was revived, a division took place at a meeting of the dissenting ministers of London, on the question whether subscription to the doctrines of the Trinity should be required as a condition of Church communion, and a large number of Presbyterian and several general Baptist ministers advocated non-subscription, whilst the Independents and Particular Baptists advocated subscription. From that time Arianism spread amongst the English Presbyterian and the general Baptist congregations, and they are now, with but few exceptions, claimed by the Unitarian body.*

Before adducing further evidence in support of this side of the question, in order to give due weight to what will be quoted, it may be desirable to refer to a caution suggested by Dr. Rees with regard to the evidence of the fathers of Methodism. "It seems,"

* Phillips's "Wales," pp. 109-117 *passim*.

says he, "that the early Methodists, either from prejudice against their Nonconforming brethren, or a desire to claim to themselves the undivided honour of having evangelized the Principality, designedly misrepresented or ignored the labours of all other sects." It is quite possible for the labours of the earlier Nonconformists to be ignored as well as the efforts of the Methodists to be too highly extolled, but we can hardly think it to be within the compass of human frailty that such good men as the early Methodists are proved to have been, should have designedly misrepresented the labours of others, either from want of thought or predominance of malice. But the testimony to the comparatively weak condition of Nonconformity before the rise of Methodism is not confined to members of this body. In addition to the view already referred to as expressed by Sir T. Phillips, Judge Johnes also thinks that, "at the Revolution, the dissenters exhausted their strength by controversies amongst themselves on the rite of baptism; on which subject a difference of opinion had long existed amongst them, though persecution had prevented them from making it a ground of disunion. *Till the breaking out of Methodism their cause continued to decline.*"* The same author also refers to the testimony of one of the early dissenters themselves in connection with an incident which directly proves the waning state of religion in North Wales, and which contains an indirect reference to a relative state of things in South Wales. As the extract is valuable for some other points confirmatory of the same general conclusion, it may be interesting to quote it *verbatim* :—

"In the year 1736 there were only six dissenting chapels in all North Wales. In this year an incident occurred which forms an interesting link between the history of the early Welsh dissenters (the followers of Wroth) and that of the Methodists, connecting together the darkening prospects of the former and the first symptoms of that more powerful impulse which was communicated by the latter. One Sunday, Mr. Lewis Rees, a dissenting minister from South Wales, and father of the celebrated author of the 'Cyclopædia,' visited Pwllheli, a town in the promontory of Lleyn, in Caernarvonshire, and one of the few places in which the Independents still possessed a chapel. After the service, the congregation collecting around him, complained bitterly that their

* "Essay on some of the Causes of Dissent," p. 10.

numbers were rapidly diminishing, that the few who yet remained were for the most part poor, and that everything looked gloomy to their cause. To which the minister replied, 'The dawn of true religion is again breaking in South Wales,—a great man named Howell Harris has recently risen up, who goes about instructing the people in the truths of the gospel.' Nor was he mistaken, either in his anticipation that dissent was on the eve of bursting forth with tenfold vigour in Wales, nor in the man from whom he expected this result; the first elements of Methodism were already at work; Howell Harris was its founder, and one of its most distinguished champions. Properly speaking the history of Methodism is the history of dissent in Wales; before entering, however, upon this interesting subject, it will be necessary to give a cursory view of the state of the Church in Wales at the time of its origin, as hardly a doubt can be entertained that the predisposing causes to Methodism were to be found in the inefficiency of the Establishment."*

Similar in effect is the evidence of a writer who belonged to a denomination which had honourably laboured for the enlightenment of the country long before the rise of Methodism, and who was a contemporary with the founders of Methodism, whose evidence is of so much greater value, inasmuch as he describes events of which he himself was an eye-witness. "A great number of youth and others," says this writer, "in Wales were then wholly irreligious. They were accustomed to meet together for the purpose of dancing, drinking, and other sinful practices. These for the greater part reckoned themselves as members of the Church of England. Mr. Howell Harris, in his journeys through the country, thundered terribly against swearers, blasphemers, drunkards, fighters, liars, Sabbath-breakers, etc., so much so that, if we may so speak, he seemed to shower among them sparks of the fire and brimstone from the bottomless pit itself. He exhorted in and out of doors; he cared not where, so long as he could attract people to listen to his message from God. In this he was certainly only following the example of Mr. Walter Cradoc and Mr. Vavasor Powell, who lived a century before. But in our days this was a great novelty, and vast multitudes therefore congregated to hear him. About the same time the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, a clergyman of the Estab-

* Johnes's "Essay on the Causes of Dissent in Wales," p. 10.

lished Church in Cardiganshire, began to preach in a very extraordinary manner in the church. I recollect having heard him about the year 1737, in Caermarthenshire; a great number of people was present, and I heard some of the Independents in returning home saying, 'We never heard any one to be compared to him in the Church of England unless it was Mr. Griffith Jones.' In our days there has appeared no such light among the members of the Church of England. . . . Multitudes of people who never went nigh a chapel or to any church but very seldom, yet gladly went to hear him to dwelling-houses, yea to the highways and the fields." *

No doubt Nonconformity was much weaker in North Wales at the rise of Methodism than in South Wales, and possibly, in consequence, irreligion was there more rampant. It would be quite wrong to conclude that a description of the state of things in the North at this time was applicable to the whole of Wales. Dr. Rees justly remarks that such an assumption would be "quite as absurd as if a person assumed that the majority of the population of Ireland were Protestants because it happens to be so in some districts of the Province of Ulster. It is well known that North Wales, in respect both of area and population, constitutes little more than one-third of the Principality, including Monmouthshire; and at that time its Nonconforming inhabitants scarcely amounted to one-twentieth of the whole body of Welsh Nonconformists." On the other hand it is but fair to add that the fact of a great number of nominal adherents belonging to a religious body is no safe criterion to measure thereby the state of true religion in a country. Without disputing for a moment the accuracy of the conclusions by which the able author of the "History of Nonconformity in Wales" has been able to claim such a fair proportion of the population as belonging to dissent, the description of the early Methodists of the darkness and torpor predominant throughout the country before they raised the trumpet sound of the gospel, can still be maintained in its integrity. The time immediately preceding the Methodist revival might have been a time of depression in true religion. Indeed our surmise is greatly strengthened by the consideration that the GREAT ARMINIAN CONTROVERSY began in 1729, about

* "Hanes y Bedyddwyr yn mhlith y Cymry" (History of the Baptists in Wales), p. 58.

seven years before Howell Harris entered upon his evangelistic work. With regard to this Dr. Rees says, "that all the former controversies in which the Welsh Nonconformists had been engaged sink to nothing in their importance and consequences when compared with it. . . . This unhappy agitation, in the course of a few years divided the Nonconformist body into two hostile, antagonistic, and irreconcilable parties." * Times of distraction such as these at once militate against the development of true religion. That the number of adherents belonging to Nonconformity at this time indicated quantity rather than quality is plainly shown in the little restrictive influence they exerted on the persecuting propensities of their fellow-countrymen, even in South Wales. Rev. W. Williams strikingly refers to this fact when he observes "that earnest preachers of the gospel, who affectionately warned them to flee from the wrath to come, were received in every neighbourhood with stones and brickbats, and met with the worst treatment as far as South Wales was concerned, in some of those very localities where, according to the statistics before us, Nonconformity had the greatest number of adherents." †

Taking all these facts into consideration the descriptions given of the enormous amount of profanity, drunkenness, superstition and general immorality prevalent in the country at the rise of Methodism, although chiefly applicable to North Wales, must be looked upon as being equally true of too many localities in South Wales. Several pictures have been drawn of the state of the country at the time, but probably the most graphic as well as the most valuable from the peculiar advantages which its author had to bear record as an eye-witness, is that given us by Rev. John Evans, of Bala, in the *Trysorfa Ysrydol* of 1799. He was then bordering upon eighty years of age, but lived until he was ninety-four years old; he describes the state of things in the year 1742, when he was about twenty years of age. The description is given in the form of a dialogue between *Scrutator* and *Senex*, the former representing, as it is supposed, Mr. Charles, and the latter Mr. Evans. From this and other testimonies, the great work accomplished by the Sunday Schools can be better appreciated when it is remembered that in less than half a century, these evil practices,

* "History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales," p. 207.

† "Welsh Calvinistic Methodism," Introduction, p. 13.

like birds of the night, entirely disappeared before the glorious light which they were the means of propagating.

"In those days," *Senex* replies to certain remarks of *Scrutator*, "there was great darkness in the land. Bibles were very scarce; hardly any of the lower ranks could read at all; and the customs of the country were very corrupt and immoral. In this respect there was no difference between gentle and simple, layman and clergyman. Gluttony, drunkenness, and licentiousness like a torrent overran the land. Nor were the doctrines and precepts of the churches but dark and feeble to counteract these evils. From the pulpit the name of the Redeemer was hardly ever heard; nor was much mention made of the natural sinfulness of man, nor of the influence of the Holy Spirit. On Sunday mornings the poor were more constant in their attendance at church than the gentry; but the Sunday afternoons were spent by all in idle amusements. Almost every Sabbath there was what was called *Chwar'yddfa gampau*, in some part of the district. In these the young men of the neighbourhood had a trial of strength, and the people assembled from the surrounding country to see their strength. On Saturday nights, particularly in the summer, the young men and maids held what they called *singing eves* (*nosweithiau canu*), that is they met together and diverted themselves by singing in turns to the harp, and by dancing till the dawn of the morning. In this town (Bala), they used to employ the Sundays in the public houses dancing and singing, or in playing tennis against the town hall and other games. In every corner of the town some sport or other went on till the light of the Sabbath day had faded away. In the summer, 'interludes' (a kind of rustic drama), were performed on the table of the town hall, gentlemen and peasants sharing the diversion together, to the utter profanation of the sacred day. A set of vagabonds called *Y bobl gerdded*, walking people, who were of corrupt and beastly habits, used to traverse the country, begging and doing worse things with impunity, to the disgrace of the officers for allowing them. With regard to true religion and godliness, if they are known by their fruits, there were hardly any—at all events as far as I could perceive."*

The state of religion in North Wales shortly before the starting of Sunday Schools is thus given in the "Life of Charles of Bala":—

* *Trysorfa Ysprydol* for 1799, pp. 30, 31 (*Spiritual Treasury*).

“True religion had forsaken the country. There was nothing like the semblance of it in the Church, nor was there much of it among the few dissenters that were very thinly scattered here and there. Those who possessed a little of its true spirit were the few who had been, in different parts, converted, principally by the labours of Daniel Rowland, H. Davis, Howell Harris, and W. and P. Williams, who occasionally came up from South Wales and itinerated through the country. This labour of love commenced about the year 1740. Though their converts collectively were numerous, yet compared with the number of the inhabitants they were but few. Many parts of the country never heard the sound of the gospel; the work, therefore, was in a great measure a missionary work. No more knowledge of God or of his word was to be found in most places than in a heathen land. The immoralities and ungodliness which prevailed were such as might be expected from this state of spiritual ignorance. The Bible was almost an unknown book, seldom to be met with, especially in the houses of the poor.”

Another author directly substantiates the opinion that the time before the rise of Methodism, was a period of great languor and depression. “This awakening,” says he, “was the means of not only establishing a new sect in Wales, but also of reviving the old sects which had previous existence there; for though there were celebrated and useful men among the Independents in the Principality, yet a torpidity and listlessness in spiritual concerns had to a great degree crept over every denomination. The revival by the Methodists was hailed by all the Calvinistic sects in Wales and in England, as the longed-for dawn of day and the rising of the sun, after a protracted, wearisome and starless night.” *

Judge Johnes also says respecting the Welsh people before the rise of Methodism, that “with all their social sprightliness they were then a superstitious and consequently a gloomy race. The influence of the Church of England had confessedly done little to civilize the people; they still retained many habits apparently derived from paganism, and not a few of the practices of popery. Their funerals, like those of the Irish, were scenes of riot and wassail. When the Methodists first came into North Wales, the peasantry expressed their horror of them and their opinions by the truly popish gesture of crossing their foreheads: they also paid

* “Hanes Prydain Fawr” (History of Great Britain), pp. 567, 568.

great veneration to a tale called 'Breuddwyd Mair' (Mary's Dream), obviously a Popish legend ('Trysorva,' vol. ii. p. 516. Drych yr Amseroedd). Children were taught, even within my recollection, to repeat a rhyme like the following as soon as they had been put into bed at night:—

‘There are four corners to my bed,
And four angels there are spread;
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,
God bless the bed that I lie on.’

Some of their customs and notions were extremely fanciful. On the Sunday after the funeral each relative of the deceased knelt on his grave exclaiming, 'Nevoedd iddo,' literally, heaven to him; that is, 'may he soon reach heaven.' This is plainly a relict of the Popish custom of praying the soul out of purgatory. If children died before their parents, the parents regarded them as so many candles to light them to Paradise. When Wesley came into Wales, he found the ignorance of the people so great that he pronounced them 'as little versed in the principles of Christianity as a Creek or Cherokee Indian.' To this declaration he adds the striking expression that, notwithstanding their superstition and ignorance, the people 'were ripe for the Gospel,' and most enthusiastically anxious to avail themselves of every opportunity of instruction."*

One special feature belonging to the Methodist revival, at once distinguishing it from the labours of the earlier Nonconformists, and ensuring a permanency for its results, was the impulse it gave to education and love of literature among all denominations alike. By organizing day and Sunday Schools, each wave of revivalism, like the rising of the tide, was a level from which a still higher wave arose in the moral and religious elevation of the people. Whichever denomination worked the hardest, or most successfully, in the past, for the welfare of the country, all alike, and much in the same manner, after the rise of Methodism, have availed themselves of the machinery of Sunday Schools, with the peculiar characteristics stamped upon them by that revival, in order to make continually, further inroads into the domains of ignorance and irreligion. It being agreed by all, that the Sunday Schools, now the common heritage of every denomination, must be

* Johnes's "Essay on Causes of Dissent," pp. 13, 14.

traced to the Methodist body, as either directly or indirectly connected with their production in Wales; and as the man whose name is inseparably connected with their establishment, THOMAS CHARLES, was a member of that body, it will be necessary, in order to place the reader *en rapport* with us in our future narration, to explain, as briefly as possible, the progress of this body up to the time when Mr. Charles began to labour in its ministry, and to deliberate in its councils. Those who wish to enter more fully into details will find every information on this subject in "A History of Welsh Methodism," written in the vernacular, by the Rev. John Hughes, of Liverpool, and published in three large octavo volumes containing about six hundred pages each, or in a very interesting compendium, entitled, "Welsh Calvinistic Methodism," written in English, by the Rev. W. Williams, of Swansea. We shall confine ourselves to the few facts necessary to elucidate our subject, at the same time endeavouring to correct some popular errors, which are constantly repeated, respecting the denomination.

A remarkable fact in connection with the Methodist revival is that it began at two different parts of the country almost simultaneously, but the movements were quite apart from each other and entirely independent the one of the other. Like two streams, they kept for a time flowing in different channels, but eventually merged into one mighty river which watered the whole country, and made glad the city of God therein, for many generations. The originator of the revival in the one part, Breconshire, was Howell Harris of Trefecca, and in the other, Cardiganshire, Rev. Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho. In both instances it commenced within the Established Church—in the one case through the instrumentality of a clergyman in full canonical orders, in the other through a layman, who never received official consecration to the work. Howell Harris dates his conversion from Whitsunday, 1735, when after weeks of conflict arising from a sense of the guilt of his sins, and a hope that through an amended life and a multiplication of good works, he might be able to make his peace with God, he was led to see the vanity of this hope; but that through Jesus Christ and his infinite merit on his behalf, a peace which passeth understanding might become his treasure and heritage. He believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; and his troubled soul, in due course, found the rest promised by

him to the weary and heavy-laden. In the following November he went up to Oxford, intending to follow the ordinary University course, in order to qualify himself for preferment in the Church. But he soon became tired of the sights of immorality and disorder which daily met his eyes there; and consequently, at the expiration of the term, he returned to Wales, and never more thought of a University career. In the year 1736 he began that course of warning and exhorting his fellow countrymen, in matters appertaining to their eternal welfare, which was afterwards, in one mode or another, uninterruptedly continued until the day of his death, which took place 21st of July, 1773. He was indefatigable in his labours. He traversed the country in all directions with the everlasting gospel in his mouth; he faced all dangers and abuse, which were unsparingly laid in his path, to carry out his important mission, as Williams of Pantycelyn, who was converted through his instrumentality, in his elegy to him, in the vernacular sums up his peregrinations—

“ He proclaimed the rich provisions
Which the gospel has in store,
From the banks of placid Severn
To Saint David’s western shore.”

Daniel Rowlands, the originator of the movement in the other part of the country, was a curate for his brother, Rev. John Rowlands, in the parish church of Llangeitho, on the banks of the little river Ayron, in Cardiganshire. He was a man of superior scholarship for those times, and for that reason had been permitted to take orders one year before the usual age. Even before his conversion he had gained considerable popularity as a preacher, for in imitation of a celebrated Independent minister of his neighbourhood, Rev. Phillip Pugh of Llwynypiod, he adopted what he considered to be the secret of his neighbour’s strength, the “thundering” style of pulpit oratory. So successful was he in the handling of this weapon that it is said over a hundred of his congregation were in deep anxiety for the eternal welfare of their souls before the preacher himself had any care for his own salvation. His conversion, as already mentioned, was brought about under the ministry of Rev. Griffith Jones, of Llanddowror, when preaching at Llanddewi Brefi, a place about five miles from Llangeitho, on behalf of his circulating schools. Mr. Rowlands continued to

“thunder” for some time after, and with far greater effect than before, as he did it now from the earnestness of personal conviction. Ere long he began to mingle his terrors with the “balm of Gilead,” to soothe and comfort, the effect of which on the congregation was to produce the feeling of “rejoicing” which often broke out in loud demonstrations, and which has often since been the result of a manifest outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The “times of refreshing” which the people enjoyed then, at the church of Llangeitho, “from the presence of the Lord,” were truly remarkable. Often they took no note of time, so entirely were preacher and hearers absorbed into the spiritual world. One Sabbath morning the preacher continued so long to exhort, and the hearers to hang on his lips with no signs of weariness, that a ray of light coming in through the western window of the church alone made him conscious of the duration of the service. They had been together from the time of the morning service until the sun was about to set. Very soon his fame spread in all directions, and many from all parts of the country came to hear the wonderful preacher. In this respect Rowland’s ministry differed from that of Harris. The latter’s for many years was entirely itinerant. Not being in holy orders, he had no authority to dispense the sacraments. His great point was to preach to the people, and to organize “private societies,” where they could meet together for spiritual encouragement and edification, but he left them to partake of the Lord’s supper in their neighbouring churches. Rowlands, on the other hand, having a regular charge at Llangeitho, drew the people more to himself. It is true he made occasional evangelistic tours beyond his own parish, and from time to time there was no part of the Principality but received a visit from him. His popularity and eloquence, however, were such that persons were known to come from a distance of one hundred miles to hear him preach on the Sabbaths of his administering the Lord’s Supper at Llangeitho. They came by sea and land, very often starting early on Saturday morning and continuing their travels far into the night, so as to reach their place of destination punctually for the morning service. It was no uncommon occurrence to have so many as three thousand communicants to dispense the sacrament to, on a Sabbath morning, over whom Rowlands presided but was assisted by other brethren. One beneficial effect of the periodical

contact of clergymen and "exhorters" with Rowlands at Llangeitho, was that they caught a portion of his spirit, and went forth to other parts to spread the truths in which they had experienced so much consolation themselves. The "exhorters" were simply preachers of the gospel, and corresponded almost entirely with the class latterly known as lay preachers. Several clergymen, from the earliest time, took an active part in the revival. Of those known as the "fathers," in addition to Harris and Rowlands, were Rev. Howell Davies of Pembrokeshire, who at one time had no fewer than two thousand communicants in that county, Rev. William Williams of Pantycelyn, and Rev. Peter Williams of Caermarthen. So mightily did the work of the Lord prosper by means of their labours, that by the year 1742, six years after the beginning of the revival, there were ten clergymen of the Church of England, and forty exhorters, belonging to the army of the reformers; and two years later, as many as one hundred and forty "societies," or embryo churches, were reckoned in South Wales only. Rowlands continued to labour with varying success, but mostly with marked blessings attending his ministrations, until his death, which took place at a ripe age in the year 1790.

This movement is called "The Methodist Revival," the name by which a similar movement in England about the same time is also known; but it should be remembered that the two movements were quite distinct as regards origin and mode of development. There is nothing more natural than to conclude, since Whitefield and Wesley in England, Harris at Trefecca, and Rowlands at Llangeitho, began to agitate the country in religious matters about the same time, that they were associated together in their conversion, and that they preconcerted measures, to take different parts of the country by surprise together, in warning the people to flee from the wrath to come. But facts unmistakably explain quite a different course. Rowlands knew nothing of Harris's conversion, and whether the latter came in contact with the English Reformers at Oxford or not, it is quite evident that he had known Christ as his Saviour, and had been actuated by His love to work in His vineyard, before he ever went to the University. Two years after the good work had been commenced, Harris received a letter which was quite unexpected, from Whitefield, encouraging him to continue; and some few months previously, he had

received intelligence of the wonderful outpouring experienced on the banks of the Ayr. To a man in Harris's position who, without episcopal ordination, or a call from any special congregation, had gone forth to teach sinners in the way of life everlasting, it was a matter of great consolation to receive Whitefield's encouraging words, and to kindle his zeal anew, when at times hesitating whether he was doing what was right. With regard to the origin of these different movements we can therefore safely assert that, as it is said of Samson, "the spirit of the Lord was moving him in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol," so also the one and the same spirit moved Whitefield in Gloucester, Harris at Trefecca and Talgarth, and Rowlands at Llangeitho, but all three quite independently the one of the other. Then with regard to the development of the movements. The Welsh revivalists, according to the lively feelings of those days with regard to doctrinal differences, could not have much sympathy with the Wesleyan phase of the English revival. The latter body, it is well known, were Arminians, but the former held Calvinistic opinions. The Welsh reformers fraternized more with Whitefield than with Wesley, but priority of action in all the steps that led to secession, whether in connection with the one or the other, though not in the very secession itself, evidently belongs to the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales. Wesley did not begin to preach in the open air till long after the first Welsh Methodists, but in one thing he stole a march upon them—his followers left the Church entirely in his life-time, and at his instigation, whereas the Welshmen clung enthusiastically to the Church till the year 1810, at which period the original founders of their body were in the grave.

The following comparison of dates may serve to put the subject in a clearer light * :—

WELSH METHODISTS.

- 1735—Field preaching by Howell Harris (Whitefield was not in deacon's orders till 1736).
- 1736—Formation, by Howell Harris, of religious societies, which afterwards seceded from the Church.
- 1810—Ordination of laymen, by Welsh Methodist clergymen.

ENGLISH METHODISTS.

- 1739—Field preaching in England by Whitefield.—Southey's "Life of Wesley," vol. i. p. 230.
- 1739—Formation of classes or societies by John Wesley.—Idem, vol. i. p. 391.
- 1784—Wesley ordained Dr. Coke.

* Quoted from Johnes's Essay, p. 33.

The last item in the above comparisons justifies the enumeration of another distinctive feature in the Welsh Methodist revival—the extreme reluctance with which the leaders left the Established Church. It was their evident wish to be retained in the Church. They were hoping to the last moment that some terms of reconciliation might be discovered by which they should be enabled to return to the old fold. Hence it was that they never sought the privilege of the sacraments except in connection with the Established Church. Howell Harris and “his family” always communicated at Talgarth church; and for seventy-five years, at great inconvenience, were all the members of the body obliged to attend the parish churches for the communion, or wait to be served by the few episcopally-ordained ministers among themselves, who every year were becoming fewer and weaker. Though their champions one by one had fallen under the discipline of their Church, and were excommunicated from her pale, first Rev. William Williams of Pantycelyn, then Peter Williams, and after the revival of 1762, the great Rowlands himself, still these, and their more favoured brethren who were allowed to be Methodists and retain their livings, were at great pains to teach their followers and impress upon the world, that they were not dissenters. It was only in 1810, when the body had become far too numerous, and too much scattered over the whole of Wales, to be supplied with the ordinances by the existing provisions, that they felt compelled to go over to the Nonconformists, by this final step of lay ordination. In this light considered, the formation of the Calvinistic body was more the result of *expulsion* than *secession*. Respect for the Church of their fathers continued to linger long in the breasts of the earlier Methodists; but now for some years this body has become as decidedly Nonconformist as any in the Principality. It remains to be added respecting the Methodist revival, that it prospered notwithstanding difficulties and much opposition. The hindrances to its progress arose from two sources—attacks and persecutions from without, as well as disunion and disruption from within. With regard to the persecution, the anomalous position in which the leaders chose to place themselves conduced greatly to increase their difficulties. They might under ordinary circumstances have availed themselves of the protection of the Act of Toleration, but as they were unwilling to declare themselves “dissenters,” and

preferred being considered members of the Church of England, they were at once liable to the censure of the ecclesiastical courts, without the benefit of civil protection. In them was again fulfilled the prediction concerning the earlier Christians, that "man's enemies would be those of his own household." In going beyond the bounds of their own parishes, and preaching in unconsecrated places, they evidently transgressed the laws of their Church, and since this was not tolerated within the Church, they came very often to a greater share of penalty than mere expulsion could have entailed. Dr. Rees summarizes the various modes of attack to which they were submitted in the following words: "The inoffensive worshippers were abused, most mercilessly pelted with stones, wounded with knives, shot at; men, and even women, were stripped naked in the presence of the crowd; able-bodied men were pressed for the army or navy, and driven away from their friends and families like cattle to different parts of England. A full account of the sufferings of the Nonconformists and Methodists in North Wales in the eighteenth century would fill a large volume."*

The following extract from a letter written by Howell Harris to a friend respecting a journey in North Wales in the year 1748, will serve to show the nature of the Methodists' labours and their perils. "I was," he says, "seven nights in succession during this journey without undressing, and travelled a hundred miles from the morning of one day to the evening of the next, without having any rest, preaching at midnight or in the early morning on the mountains. This I was obliged to do to avoid persecution. The week before my visit a man near Wrexham had been fined £20 by Sir W. W. Wynn, and several of the hearers had had to pay five shillings each, and one ten shillings, a sum which he had been obliged to pay once before. This is the third time that the brethren have been treated in this manner; and on the last occasion there was only one brother present praying with a family."

More than once within the history of the Calvinistic Methodist body, have internal dissensions arising from doctrinal disagreements threatened to bring the cause to the verge of destruction. The first culminated as early as the year 1751, and arose from apparently different views held by Harris from the rest of his brethren respecting the person of Christ. It is generally agreed upon now, that

* "History of Nonconformity in Wales," p. 399.

the difference was more in words than in substance; but so great was the contention that the whole body was divided into two separate camps. The one party was called "Harris's People," and the other "Rowland's People." It was at this time that Harris retired to his seclusion at Trefecca, taking the most faithful of his followers with him there to "his family," as they were called, and ceased itinerating in the way he had been accustomed, to the end of his days. This unhappy contention had a withering effect on many of the Churches, and the good cause was effectually checked in its onward progress for about eleven years, at the end of which period it pleased the Lord to visit his people again with a "power from on high;" the brethren who had been estranged forgot their differences, the leaders became reconciled to each other, and the Churches throughout the country rejoiced once more in beholding another special manifestation of "the grace of God." With regard to subsequent trials arising from doctrinal errors, the writer of "A Short History of the Calvinistic Methodists," gives us the following general view up to the beginning of the present century. "Before the year 1760," he says, "Antinomianism, with its fair but serpentine speeches, endeavoured to win over some of our party to the side of carnal liberty. Towards the year 1765, Sandemanianism, with its brazen front, most impudently attempted a breach of our ranks. About the year 1770, Sabellianism, with its unhallowed views, made an effort to enter itself in our midst. Soon after the commencement of the present century, Neonomianism, newly clad from head to foot in comely dress, priding itself on its consummate order, and being extremely plausible in its natural reasonings, founded on false philosophy and vain deceit, obtruded itself among our people. To these errors—these wolves in sheep's clothing—a few, of whom we had hoped better things, fell a prey; but through the kindness of our God, the connection may in general employ the words of the apostle, "But out of them all the Lord hath delivered me."* Since the above date, the connection has not been free from important controversies on doctrinal points, but they always served more as exercises in theological learning than impediments to the free course of the gospel in their midst. This is proved from the uniform progress in numbers made throughout the last decades of its history. By the year 1881, the date of

* "English Confession of Faith," p. 12.

the last census, the statistics of the body show that there belonged to it, in Wales, Monmouthshire, and the towns of England—chapels and preaching stations, 1334; ministers and preachers, 957; communicants, 118,979; hearers, 276,189 (that is about one-fifth of the whole population of Wales). The voluntary contributions for the year amounted to £157,348 10s. 3d.

The body had been in existence for about fifty years, when Mr. Charles took the final step to associate himself with it; and although by that time it had gained a firm hold in the country, his extensive learning and practical genius became soon to be considered as valuable acquisitions to its strength. He at once became the organizer of the body, bringing it as regards order and discipline much to the shape in which it is now found. It is not our intention further to refer much to Mr. Charles in his character of builder up of this body, for he was not a man of a denomination as much as of the whole nation, yea of the world at large. His sympathies were cosmopolitan, and though he may be incidentally referred to in connection with the body of which he was a member,—which it is hoped will be intelligible, after the above brief sketch,—all incidents, we trust, however associated, will be considered valuable, if throwing light on his ardent zeal and indefatigable labours whilst endeavouring to realize the large-hearted aspirations of his soul.

Thomas Charles was born on the 14th of October, 1755. He was the son of a respectable farmer, called Rice Charles, residing at Pant dwfn, in the parish of Llanfihangel, Caermarthenshire, on the left hand side of the road leading from St. Clears to Laugharn, and about ten miles from the town of Caermarthen. His parents intending him for the ministry, sent him, when between ten and twelve years of age, to school to Llanddowror, where, as has already been related, the Rev. Griffith Jones had so devotedly laboured up to the time of his death, in 1761. He remained there for about four years, and during his stay received what he calls, in his autobiography, his first religious impressions, but how or by what means, he had no distinct recollection. At first they were very faint, which accounts for the dimness of the recollection; in fact, the chief signs of a religious leaning which he could revert to in after life were the pleasure he derived from hearing sermons, reading the Bible, and perusing all good books he could come across. The book which proved the greatest blessing to him was "Bunyan on the

Two Covenants ;” so great was the impression produced on his mind when reading certain passages of this book that at the time he used to weep bitterly. In the simplicity of his heart, he looked on all who regularly attended church as religious, though he often wondered how worldly the conversation of many of them was, and especially their demeanour on Sundays. For a long time he had no true friend to whom to unbosom the feelings and difficulties of his heart ; but eventually he became acquainted with an old disciple of Rev. Griffith Jones, named Rhys Hugh, who lived not far from his father’s house. In his diary he makes a very respectful mention of this humble friend. He used to call with him once or twice every week, and so great was the profit he derived from his spiritual intercourse with him that he came to love him as his own soul, and ever after looked upon him as his father in Christ. At that time, he acknowledges that he had but an imperfect conception of the nature of the gospel plan of salvation. His religion consisted chiefly of strong aspirations after something he had not yet attained, accompanied with an entire devotion to the work of trying to secure it. With this feeling in his heart, he made a public profession of religion, introduced family worship into his father’s house, and through his kindness and earnestness greatly influenced every member of the family.

When about fourteen years of age, he was sent to the Presbyterian College at Caermarthen, then under the superintendence of Rev. Mr. Jenkins ; and soon after he joined himself to the private society of the Calvinistic Methodists, assembling together in that town. There he came in contact with many eminently pious brethren, from whose example and counsels he derived much benefit. “Harvey’s Meditations,” was a book from which he derived much edification at this time. On the 20th of January, 1773, when about eighteen years of age, he went all the way from home to Capel Newydd, in Pembrokeshire, to hear Rev. Daniel Rowlands of Llangeitho preach. He has recorded the effect of the sermon on his mind in the following words :—“His text was Hebrews iv. 16 ; this was a day memorable to me as long as I live ; since that happy day I have dwelt, as it were, in a new heaven and a new earth. The change experienced by a blind man on receiving his sight is not greater than that which I felt on that day. Then was I first convinced of the sin of unbelief and of harbouring narrow and hard thoughts respecting the Almighty. I had such a view of Christ as

the great High Priest, of his love, his compassion, his power, and sufficiency for all, 'as to fill my soul with wonder, 'with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' My mind was overwhelmed with wonder. The truths brought before my mind appeared too gracious to be believed. I could not believe for true joy. The glorious views I then enjoyed, will, by meditating upon them, continue to satisfy my soul for millions of ages to come. I had before some outlines of gospel truths; but they did not penetrate deeply into my heart until now. The effects of this sermon remained with me for more than half a year, and during that time I was mostly in a happy and heavenly mood. Often when walking in the fields, I would look up to heaven and call it my home, longing the while for the glorious appearing of my Saviour to take me to himself for ever." When the 20th of January came round, he was accustomed to mark it in his diary every year, so long as he continued to write in it, as the day on which he was blessed with a special revelation of the grace and mercy of God to his soul.

In the year 1775, Providence in an unexpected manner opened the way for him to go to Oxford. He went there, not without his fears respecting the various temptations to which he understood he would be exposed; but he comforted himself with the thought that it was as easy for God to keep him in one place as another, and that with him nothing was impossible. On the 31st of May of that year, he was received a member of the University, and of Jesus College. Here he made the acquaintance of many religious young men, in whose society he derived much benefit and support. But in about two years from the date of his admission, he was brought to a great strait through his supplies from Wales suddenly failing him. This happened when he was a debtor to the college to the amount of £20. As the most honourable way of proceeding under the circumstances, he had come to the resolution to explain his condition to his creditors, and to return to Wales. But again, in quite as unexpected a manner, he was completely delivered from all his anxiety. The particulars are thus given by himself: "One morning, as I was writing to my people in Wales to acquaint them of my embarrassment, and my consequent intentions, a dear friend came in; very soon, I disclosed unto him my affairs, and how I had resolved to leave the college. To this he replied that he doubted not but that I should be assisted one way or another, at the same

time desiring me to put my mind at rest in the matter. A few days after, a gentleman sent for me to dine at his house, and before leaving, to my great surprise, handed me the £20 I was short of, adding that I should lack nothing as long as I remained at Oxford. I was very glad and very grateful for this, and the gentleman made good his word."

In the year 1777, he spent the summer vacation, together with a pious friend, at the house of the Rev. John Newton, of Olney, Bucks, to his great profit and consolation. He was ordained a deacon at Oxford, 14th of June, 1778. After this he engaged to undertake a curacy in Somersetshire, but as his rector did not require his services until Michaelmas of that year, through the invitation of his friend, Rev. Simon Lloyd, he visited Bala in Merionethshire. He spent, between Bala and other places in North Wales through which he made a tour, about five weeks. In the month of August, he and his friend, on their way to his father's house in Caermarthen-shire, called at Llangeitho, where they had the pleasure of hearing two sermons from the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, which he says in his introduction to his diary afforded him unspeakable comfort. In his reminiscences of this visit to his father's house, Mr. Charles says, "I looked upon the little nooks in the house, and the retired hedges in the fields, with a pleasure difficult to be described—spots where my soul had formerly striven with God in prayer, and where I had obtained the blessing. I could look on those corners and spots where I had enjoyed communion with God as no other than consecrated places. My father's farm wore a paradisaical aspect, and the memories of the numerous blessings imparted to me on different occasions filled my heart with gladness and praise. On the Sabbath-day of August the 16th, I preached at Llanfihangel, my father's parish church, and had the privilege of experiencing especial comfort and earnestness in the work. It was great joy to my heart to see once more my very dear and Christian friend Rhys Hugh. I could have almost wept for joy. It was the last meeting we had in this world; a month after he escaped to heaven."

About Michaelmas, he commenced his ministry in Somersetshire; in March the following year, 1779, he took his degree of B.A., and in 1780 he was received into full priestly orders. With reference to the taking of his degree, he writes:—"I am no more a member of the college. The goodness and mercy of God have been

great towards me during my stay there. My heart shall ever be submissive and grateful for the mercies I received. I was supported there by ways and means of God's arrangements, which were such as to clearly prove his invisible hand in ordaining them. The temptations which attacked me were strong and numerous, but the Lord preserved me from being overcome by them." Having laboured in his curacy for about five years, he returned to Wales to marry a young lady, Miss Jones of Bala, with whom probably he had become acquainted during his visit to Mr. Lloyd in 1778. The marriage took place on the 20th of August, 1783, after which he settled at Bala for the remainder of his life, and found in his wedded wife a true help meet for all his circumstances. It was his desire after his marriage to obtain an appointment to minister in the Church of which he was an ordained member, but for a long time he had no opening (except to read the service and preach once) nearer than Shawbury in Shropshire. He remained there for some months, as an assistant to his friend, Rev. Mr. Mayer, who was rector of the parish. In the early part of 1784, he obtained the curacy of Llanymowddwy, about fourteen miles from Bala. For the space of somewhat less than a year, he travelled there every week, through all kinds of weather, sometimes on foot, sometimes on horseback, to perform his duties. The road at that time was wretched, the steep and lonely ascent of the mountain pass called Bwlch-y-groes forming a considerable part of the journey. But neither the length and difficulty of the journey (twenty-eight miles between going and returning), the smallness of the salary, the frowns and scorn he experienced at the hands of some of his parishioners for his earnestness and faithfulness, nor any other hindrance caused him to relinquish his charge. Mr. Charles there revived the good old custom of catechising the children every Sunday afternoon, after the vespers, though this gave an offence to some of the members. The Lord at this time did not allow his servant to labour without giving him tangible proofs of the good effects of his teachings on some of his hearers, though with others his assiduity and fidelity only excited them to greater enmity against him. They sent a complaint respecting his conduct to the rector of the parish, and he at once gave him notice to quit his service in due time. Those to whom Mr. Charles's actions were agreeable, drew up a petition, to which

many subscribed their names, praying that he might be allowed to continue his ministration, but this did not reach the rector, owing to the person who had undertaken to take it to him being persuaded to destroy the document on the way, as he himself confessed some time after. The consequence was that Mr. Charles found himself bound to leave when the notice expired, that is on the 1st of January, 1785.

After this, he ministered for some time at Llanwddyn, a church very similarly situated, as regards distance and locality, in an easterly direction from Bala; and rather than be idle, he again went occasionally to preach to Shawbury, notwithstanding the distance to go and return, besides other considerations. At this time he was very undecided as to the best course to follow, but he was beginning to interpret these signs as God's call for him to leave the Established Church altogether, and never to preach again within its walls. It is probable that either before leaving Llanymowddwy, or immediately after, he wrote to his old friend and kind patron, Mr. Newton of Olney, to relate to him his trials, and to solicit the benefit of his prayers and counsel in the matter. His advice was that Mr. Charles should leave Bala, North Wales, and the Principality too, rather than give up the thought of ceasing to minister within the walls of the Established Church. The reply was that he could not think of leaving Wales, as he was inclined to marry his country as he had married his wife, "for better and for worse," and "until death should them part." Mr. Newton was led to see after this, though he understood it not at the time, that the Lord was leading his servant along the right way for the promotion of his own glory, and the furtherance of his own great cause; for not only was his own nation blessed in the step he ultimately took, but other nations and generations then unborn. The great struggle and conflict through which his mind passed when severing his connection with his mother Church, may be seen reflected in the following extracts from letters to a friend:—

"There are no tidings of a church. But all friends here seem to give me up for the chapels in Wales; whilst at the same time they are much satisfied with my conduct in waiting so long. All I can say is, that I desire and hope sincerely to be where the Lord would have me to be, I cannot carry a guilty conscience any longer about me, which I must do, if my days are consumed in vanity."

“ June 12th, 1784. I am in a strait, between leaving the Church and continuing in it. Being turned out of three churches in this country, without the prospect of another, what shall I do? In the last church I served, I continued three months. There the Gospel was much blessed, as to the present appearance of things. The people there are calling on me, with tears, to feed them with the bread of life. What shall I do? Christ’s words continually sound in my ears: ‘Feed my lambs.’ I think I feel my heart willing to engage in the work, be the consequences what they may. But then I ought to be certain in my own mind that God calls me to preach at large. This stimulates me to try all means to continue in the Church, and to wait a little longer to see what the Lord will do. I thank the Lord I want nothing, but to know his will, and strength to do the same.”

In accordance with the feeling expressed in the last words quoted, he offered to serve gratuitously in one of the churches of his neighbourhood, but not being accepted his painful struggle came to an end—he determined to follow what he considered to be the intimation of Providence and cast his lot with the denomination sprung from the Methodist revival and now generally known as “The Calvinistic Methodists” or “Welsh Presbyterians.” This took place in the early part of the year 1785. Twenty-five years after, he was led to review the steps which led him to his decision, in giving advice to a clerical friend who had sought his assistance, under circumstances somewhat similar to his own. His words on this occasion are valuable both as showing how completely he had the approval of his conscience in the step he had taken, and what delight he had experienced in the arduous labours which he had undertaken entirely from his own spontaneous desire to do good.

“ 1810.—In reply to your favour,” he writes, “I have but little to say. I feel for your perplexity; but I have no doubt that if you look up simply to the Lord, he will graciously direct you in the way you should go. But it is not for me to determine. Providence, I am fully convinced, led me in the way in which I move. Unbiassed by prejudice, self-interest, the love of ease, or the honour which comes from men, lift up your eyes to the hills, from whence our help cometh, and the Lord will guide you safely, and in his own good time you will see the way clearly before you. I feel cautious in advising the servant of another. The Lord only

knows what he has designed and fitted for you. Many formerly were ready to advise me; but the most forward were wisest of the mark. *Gwell pwyll nog aur* (prudence is better than gold); *ond tan enw pwyll y daw twyll* (but under the name of prudence deceit will come). These are very wise Welsh adages. I most sincerely pray that you may be directed."

In another letter he says:—

"You are much wanted in the Establishment, if suffered to continue in it, and permitted to be faithful. On the other side, there is work enough for you out of the Church, if called, and gifted to proceed on the itinerant plan. As you are already in the Church, I think rather you ought to continue in it, if not forced out of it. When I began to itinerate, it was because they would not employ me in the Church in this country. I intended removing to England as soon as circumstances admitted of it. By a few excursions on the itinerant plan, I got, by degrees, so far into the work, that I could not conscientiously recede from and leave it. The leadings of Providence towards me, are no rule for others."

In a third letter written the same year, he says:—

"I am glad you have it in your mind to do good, and to promote by all means in your power the eternal salvation of immortal souls, who are perishing all around us. The work of the ministry, and not emolument, ought to engage our attention. I might have been preferred in the Church; it has been repeatedly offered me; but I really would rather to have spent the last twenty-three years of my life as I have done, wandering up and down our cold and barren country, than if I had been made an archbishop. It was no choice of mine; it was Providence that led me to it. Others' line of usefulness may be different; but in every line and in every situation, it is required that we should be faithful, abounding always in the work of the Lord."

It might have been expected that he would have received at once a hearty welcome to the bosom of that denomination with which he desired to cast his lot. Far otherwise it proved, however, for awhile. Many of the members looked upon him as proud and untalented; but this arose entirely from a want of deeper insight into his character, and greater acquaintance with him. As he turned more amongst them, he was continually becoming more

highly valued for his politeness as a gentleman, his zeal and simplicity as a Christian, and the superiority of his matter as well as the earnestness of his style as a preacher. About August, in the year 1785, it is probable that the Rev. Daniel Rowlands heard him preach for the first time in an Association at Llangeitho, when, with evident warmth and joy, he gave utterance to those memorable words, "Mr. Charles is the gift of God to North Wales." Before Mr. Rowland's death he discovered that the words had a much wider application.

Mr. Charles's history has now been briefly sketched up to the time he began to be engaged in paving the way for the establishment of Sunday Schools; but as others are alleged to have been in the field, some before him, and others contemporaneously with him, we shall reserve for another chapter the discussion of the question, "Who has the best claim to be recognized as the founder of these institutions in Wales?"

CHAPTER VII.

THE EARLIEST SABBATH SCHOOLS OF WALES.

Rivalry between localities for the honour of having first started a Sunday School—The Crawlom School near Llanidloes started in 1770—An early School at Pwllheli—The earliest Sabbath School in South Wales at Cilycwm near Llandovery—Sunday and Day Schools started by Dr. Edward Williams, of Oswestry—Morgan John Rhys and Sunday School of Hengoed in Glamorganshire—Mr. Charles's claims to be the founder of the Sunday Schools of Wales weighed—He the originator of the *system*—Not indebted to Raikes for the idea—Welsh Sunday Schools a class *sui generis*—Developed from circulating schools—The disappearance of Griffith Jones's schools before the days of Charles—Direct evidence—The author of *Drych yr Amseroedd*, and these schools—Indirect evidence derived from ignorance found during Mr. Charles's first itineracies—Establishes a new system of circulating schools—Character of teachers—How supported—Mr. Charles's multifarious labours in connection therewith—Discontinued from want of support after twenty years' existence—Their want not felt because Sunday Schools become general—Mr. Charles's letters on the circulating schools.

THERE can be no better proof of the high honour in which the Sunday School is held in the present day, than the eagerness with which different localities vie one with the other for the proud distinction of having been the birthplace of the institution, or for having cradled it in the days of its infancy and weakness. Indeed, many a place in which it is well known that the opposition was more evident than the support during the years of doubt and trial, are now loudest in asserting their claim to have been the first foster-parents of the organization. In this respect Sunday Schools may be well compared to the treatment which the first as well as the greatest epic poet suffered at the hands of his fellow men; but with this important difference, that the change in feeling towards

Sunday Schools did not come too late to make amends for former apathy and opposition.

“A hundred cities claimed blind Homer dead,
Along whose streets alive, he begged his bread.”

As was the case with the founder of the Sunday Schools of England, Robert Raikes of Gloucester—others claiming to have



ROBERT RAIKES.

discovered the idea before him, and maintaining that he was founder only in the sense that from the one he started they were multiplied without intermission throughout the length and breadth of the land,—precisely so in the case of Thomas Charles of Bala, there is not the least doubt that humbler individuals had formed schools long before his time; but he alone has the honour of having begun the type of schools which never died away, on the contrary

whose vital reproductiveness up to the present time promises no fail or intermission. In one respect, however, the origin of the present system of Sunday Schools in England differs from the Welsh. While it has been definitively ascertained that Mr. Raikes started his first school in the house of Mr. King, in St. Catherine Street, Gloucester, in the month of July, 1780, with regard to the schools first started by Mr. Charles in Wales they are only shown us as the dawn scattered upon the mountains, with no specified place or point of time in which the light first touched upon the territory of darkness. Before, however, entering on the inquiry about the time and place that the Sunday-School system began in Wales, it may be interesting to mention those established prior to or contemporaneously with those of Mr. Charles. The first of which there is any record is the school held at

CRAWLOM, NEAR LLANIDLOES, IN 1770.

There lived at that time in this farm-house a man named Owen Brown, a Calvinistic Methodist, who was accustomed to lodge the itinerant preachers on their journeys. Amongst the number entertained by him from time to time was one Jenkin Morgan, a native of Cardiganshire, who besides being a preacher, was one of the schoolmasters employed by Madam Bevan in her circulating schools. It was the practice of these schoolmasters, when on their preaching tours, to inquire for places to start new schools, for according to the terms of the organization none had a long duration in the same place. Jenkin Morgan mentioned the subject to Brown, and the result of the interview was that in the year 1769, permission was given to him to start a school in a house not far from Crawlom, called Ty'n y fron, which belonged to Brown. At first this was only a day school. The master, however, soon noticed that many of the adults who were thirsting for knowledge wished to attend school with the children, but found it incompatible to attend to their different avocations and school at the same time. To meet their case, Morgan arranged to open a night school every Wednesday evening at Crawlom, to which all ages were able to come. As these were progressing in their simple education, and the taste of knowledge creating a demand for more, to meet their desire for more Scriptural knowledge, it was determined to hold the schools on *Sunday evenings* also. The report of the seminary

was noised abroad, and many attended from the district around, enclosing a radius of five miles, so that ere long a goodly proportion of the inhabitants were able to read God's word in their own tongue. It cannot be ascertained with exactness how soon after 1769 Sabbath teaching was commenced at Crawlom, but it must have been pretty soon after establishing the day school at Ty'n y fron, for the simple reason that Madam Bevan's schoolmasters were never permitted to remain long in the same place. The conclusion must therefore be arrived at that this Sabbath School could not have been easily started after 1770. It is to be observed that Morgan himself would most often not be present in the Sunday School, being away preaching at the time in the different chapels around, but the men and women whom he had been instrumental in teaching in the night school, became in their turn the instructors of the illiterate who came together on the Sabbaths. It is mentioned in connection with this school that the members read in addition to the Bible the Vicar's book, as "The Candle of the Welsh" was popularly called, which is a proof of its continued popularity. Being written in simple language and containing more familiar words than the authorized version of the Bible, in the absence of a specially prepared primer, it was probably used as the stepping-stone to the higher stage of Bible reading. The next individual school started, of which we have any record, was at

PWLLHELI IN CAERNARVONSHIRE, IN 1783.

The date has been arrived at by comparing what is known of the school with the account given of the erection of the first Calvinistic Methodist chapel in the town. This took place in 1781, and it is asserted that before this chapel was two years old, a school was kept within its walls. Two deacons were chiefly instrumental in the good work—one of them, John Roberts, was a poet of considerable ability, known by the bardic name of *Shon Lleyrn*, the other John Thomas, though of fewer parts, was his worthy peer both for piety and assiduity. The school was not held regularly, even for the comparatively short period of its existence. It never rose higher than once a fortnight, most often once a month, within the lifetime of the original founders. The first individual school held in South Wales is believed to be that of.

CILYCWYM, NEAR LLANDOVERY, CAERMARTHENSHIRE, 1785.

The chief instrument in starting this was Rev. William Williams, of Glangwenlas, who is represented as a clergyman of the Church of England, very pious and full of zeal and energy to do good. He had lived for thirty-seven years in England, when on account of failing health he was obliged to resign his appointment and to return to the scenes of his childhood in Wales. His father, Rhys Williams of Tynewydd, Cilycwm, was a member with the Calvinistic Methodists, who had a cause here as early as 1740; and in his days it was here that the bard of Pantycelyn worshipped with all his family. The clergyman, after settling in his native valley, joined the same denomination as his father, and not long after, in the year 1785 it is thought, started a Sunday School in the house of one David Elias, who was father of Rev. David Elias, a Calvinistic Methodist minister well known in his days in Breconshire and other parts of Wales. In conjunction with Rhys William Morgan, of the same place, he is described as having started a branch school in the hamlet of Brynteg, in another part of the parish. A son of this Morgan was living there in the year 1880. So indefatigable was Mr. Williams's zeal to multiply schools that before long we find him trying the experiment at the town of Caermarthen and other places. The first attempt here, however, was for a while a failure, owing to the opposition of well-intentioned though mistaken people, to Sunday work. But by the year 1803, the work had been accomplished, and Mr. Williams, on his return from Bristol, after an absence there of some years, to his native valley, had the gratification of finding there a flourishing institution. He had the privilege too of starting Sunday Schools in three other counties—in a place called Tref-fechan, a suburb of Aberystwith, to which reference is made hereafter; in a place called Llofft Wen, near Llanwrtyd Wells, Breconshire; and at Llanbrynmair, in Montgomeryshire, in 1795. It appears that he was acquainted with Mr. Raikes, and having participated liberally of his spirit, had become a zealous and successful advocate of this plan of imparting Scriptural knowledge.* The next Sunday Schools in order of time, apart from those of Mr. Charles, were founded by

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. ii. p. 45; vol. iii. p. 340.

DR. EDWARD WILLIAMS, OF OSWESTRY, IN 1786.

Dr. Rees says * that by the contributions of some generous English friends he opened a few Sunday Schools in North Wales, which were afterwards converted into circulating day schools under the superintendence of Dr. George Lewis, of Llanuwchllyn. The scheme met with a considerable degree of support, so that by the year 1799 thirteen masters were employed, who had 553 scholars under their care. The same author mentions earlier schools than these. In a manuscript written in 1720 by one Morgan John of Morriston, near Swansea, it is said that he had learned to read at the Independent Sunday School at Tirdwncyn, in that neighbourhood, in 1697, and that the Independent Church at Neath also had a Sunday School at that time. These schools are, however, supposed to be only catechetical meetings, such as every Nonconformist Church in that age held regularly once a week. The existence of these catechetical meetings is further confirmed by the fact that some of the catechisms used at them are still extant. A Welsh catechism for the use of Baptist Churches was published at Bristol in the year 1759. This was a translation by Abel Morgan, of the Catechism of the Particular Baptists in England, and the same as the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Conference, except a few questions and answers in its beginning concerning baptism.† There was another isolated school, which from the character of its founder has gained some notoriety, held at

HENGOED, IN GLAMORGANSHIRE, IN 1787.

The Baptist Church of Hengoed, in the parish of Gelligaer, was founded in the year 1650, and was one out of three represented in the first *Cymanfa* (Association) held by that denomination in Wales that year, at Ilston, near Swansea. The other two were Ilston itself and Olchon. In the year 1701, Rev. Morgan Griffith, from near Haverfordwest, in Pembrokeshire, accepted a call to become pastor of the church. He is described as a modest, affectionate Christian, and an intelligent, affable preacher; his name remained highly respected amongst his survivors for a long time.

* "History of Nonconformity in Wales," p. 418.

† *Greal y Bedyddwyr* for 1827, p. 239.

He continued pastor of this church until his death in 1738, though he did not enjoy perfect tranquillity during the whole of his pastorate. In the year 1730, at an Association held in his chapel, Mr. Charles Winter, of Bedwellty, Mr. Griffith's co-pastor, was charged with teaching Arminian doctrine to the congregation. A very hot debate ensued on the subject, but on Mr. Winter agreeing to subscribe to a confession of faith submitted to him in the meeting, he was permitted to retain his appointment, which remained undisturbed until his co-pastor's death. This being taken an occasion to test Mr. Winter's hold upon the Church, it was put to the vote whether he should be accepted pastor for the future, which resulted in his expulsion from the Church, and that of twenty-four of his adherents. Mr. Winter subsequently built a meeting house not far from Hengoed, at a place called Craig Fargoed, where he continued to labour until his death. From statistics of Nonconformist Churches, collected by Dr. John Evans, in the year 1717, and still preserved in Dr. Williams's library, in London, the Church at Hengoed is described as consisting of seven hundred members, reckoning the men, women, and children of every family in habitual attendance. This proves the place to have been the centre of considerable activity, in those comparatively dark and stormy times.

The members of this Church, in latter years, have been accustomed to refer, with a certain amount of pardonable pride, to the fact that a Sunday School has been associated with this chapel as early as any in Wales after the one started by Raikes in England. The particulars respecting this school are very meagre, but the name of the founder, Morgan John Rhys, is still held in much veneration. He is described as a most talented and energetic minister. He got school books printed in the Welsh language, and visited different localities far and near to establish night schools for the working classes, and Sunday Schools as well. He emigrated to America in 1794. It is quite unknown whether the schools started by him were continued uninterruptedly unto the present time, or that they ceased to exist soon after the departure of their founder beyond the Atlantic. That the parent school and the few branches connected with it, served as a radiating focus from which kindred institutions received their first illumination, or returned thither to rekindle their flagging zeal, has, so far as we are aware,

been asserted by no one; and little, therefore, can isolated examples of this kind, however commendable might have been their organization, be looked upon as having any originating part in the development of the general and compact system of schools with which the Principality is adorned at the present day. In fact, all the historians who have touched upon this subject, though differing a few years with regard to the date at which some of the above schools were started, agree in declaring that the honour of having set afloat the noble scheme of Sunday Schools throughout Wales belongs chiefly and pre-eminently to one man only, and that one was REV. THOMAS CHARLES OF BALA. He was the *first to organize a system of Sunday Schools throughout the length and breadth of the land*. Perhaps his claim to have been the Father of the Welsh Sunday-School system has not been more fully, justly, and yet temperately put forth than by his earliest biographer, Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh, and who also was his contemporary. "Mr. Charles," says Mr. Jones, "was one of the first, if not the first, within the Principality who endeavoured and succeeded to establish Sabbath Schools, and to put them in order in any considerable number and pretty generally. In the Monthly Meetings and Quarterly Associations of the Calvinistic Methodists wherever and whenever he was present, it was seldom, for many years, that he allowed an opportunity to slip without earnestly exhorting his brethren to render every aid within their power in carrying on the work. His numerous, affectionate, and spirited exhortations, as well as his own earnest personal efforts, were not permitted to go unrewarded. He found scores, hundreds, and thousands, of willing assistants, according to their varied abilities, which were at best but limited, in all parts of the country; and there is every reason to expect that much fruit will be found to follow in ages to come. Hitherto the work has been going on and increasing within the body already mentioned; and not only have other Nonconformist bodies shown a kindred zeal, but the Established Church also has, in many places, put forth faithful efforts to the same intent." *

Whether and to what extent Mr. Charles was influenced by the example and success of Mr. Raikes in England, is more than can at present be ascertained. That his labours began several years after Raikes had become pretty generally known is evident enough, but

* Quoted in *Traethodydd* for October, 1871, p. 484.

as it is a well attested fact that the first Sunday School in Wales was established at least ten years before the now famous seminary of St. Catherine Street, Gloucester, so the peculiar character of those organized by Charles points to a conception and an origin more allied to the earlier Welsh type, and entirely distinct from the schools of England. From the very first the teachers in Wales gave their labours gratuitously; adults as well as children were always taught in them; and being the direct outcome of a system of circulating day and evening schools, they are marked at once as a class *sui generis*, very difficult to be associated at all with the system of English schools, and with no accident to suggest a connection, except that the latter as a system had a priority of existence. In short, the schools founded by Mr. Charles were an exact counterpart of that founded by Jenkin Morgan, near Llanidloes, which, as already shown, was a growth out of the circulating schools of Rev. Griffith Jones and Madam Bevan.

An inquiry into the origin of Sunday Schools in Wales must include an account of the circulating schools from which they were developed. Mr. Charles, no doubt, copied his system of circulating schools entirely from that of Griffith Jones. Being fully conscious of the great benefit which they had been the means of accomplishing for his country, Mr. Charles set to work at once, after he had joined the Methodists, to revive the old institutions. Those by his time had become quite defunct; and owing to the litigation respecting the will of Madam Bevan, then pending in the Court of Chancery (1780-1811), it was quite uncertain whether the funds could ever become again available for the object which that lady had so much cherished. A remarkable proof of the high esteem in which those schools were held in the country, whilst affording at the same time an indirect allusion to the time their service was passing away, is given in the history of the Rev. Robert Jones of Rhoslan, Caernarvonshire. He is the author of an interesting little volume, entitled "*Drych yr Amseroedd*" (The Mirror of the Times), in which he describes, partly from his own recollections, and partly from conversations which he had with elder people, the sufferings of the early Methodists in their labours to enlighten and save their fellow men. This good man had inherited a fair share of the zeal and energy of those whom he so faithfully describes. When a young lad, under

eighteen years of age, he walked all the way from Caernarvonshire to Laugharne, to see Madam Bevan, and ask her for a schoolmaster for North Wales. In going he called at Trefecca, to see and hear Howell Harris, and all the way from thence to the lady's house he was praying that God should prosper him in his journey. His prayer, however, was not answered that time, for, to his great disappointment, when he arrived there, the lady was not at home, and so he had to retrace his steps to the north, with the only satisfaction of having seen the great apostle of the revival. Nothing discouraged, he tried another journey, in the year 1763, when about eighteen years of age, and this time he was more successful. She told him that she had been greatly disappointed in several of her schoolmasters, but touched with his humble petition, and modest demeanour, she promised the grant on condition that he should become the master of the school. To this he consented, as he had been much better educated than most young men of his class at the time. His mother had taught him Griffith Jones's Catechism in addition to the Bible; and he was also acquainted with the Book of Common Prayer, which he had learnt in a school kept by one Thomas Gough. As one of Madam Bevan's masters, he began his circulating school at Capel Curig in Caernarvonshire, then removed to Brynsiencyn in Anglesea, and was afterwards at Llangybi and other places, in his native county; but being a preacher, as well as schoolmaster, he came by his full share of the persecutions of the times. As an example of the petty annoyances to which he was subjected, there is a story related of him, that when keeping a school in one of the churches of Caernarvonshire, he gave this question to the children to take with them home, "Where is the Church of God?" One of the wiseacres of the neighbourhood hearing the question from the children, said in contempt, "Pooh, is that the kind of master you have, asking where the church is, and he is in it every day?" The remark was speedily carried to the master. He, wishing to convince his critic of an error which was common to him and many others of mistaking the material for the spiritual, added that the Bible spoke of the ears of the Church, referring to Acts xi. 22. When the critic heard this remark, he burst out to deride the poor schoolmaster much more, saying, "What a simpleton! What is easier for him to know than that the belfry is one of the church's

ears?" Whether he succeeded in discovering the other has not transpired.

With regard to the discontinuance of Madam Bevan's schools, at this time, Judge Johnes also remarks, "In the meantime," he says, "the means of knowledge had been withdrawn; that splendid instrument of education, which had risen like a dream—like a dream had passed away; there was a void, and the Methodists supplied it! Schools on a similar model, as we shall hereafter prove, were established in the interval by Mr. Charles of Bala; and before the year 1811, the whole country had learnt to regard the Methodists and dissenters as the instructors of the people."*

Mr. Charles's testimony respecting the great ignorance of the people, of which he became cognisant as soon as he began to itinerate, is another indirect confirmation of the fact that Rev. Griffith Jones's schools had by this time nearly all disappeared. He became an itinerant preacher as soon as he joined the Methodists in 1785, but during this year, at least, he never took very distant journeys, for he never prolonged his stay from home beyond a month, as he had arranged to administer the Lord's Supper to his own Church at Bala the last Sunday of every month. There is no record of all the places he visited at this time, but two are remarkable as having been the scenes of extraordinary influences which accompanied his preaching of the word. The first was at a place called Lôn Fudr, in the district of Lleyn, beyond Pwllheli, where his visit was attended by a great addition of members to the Church. The other was at Bontuchel, near Ruthin, at an Association held in Christmas week of that year, when he preached from Gal. iv. 4, 5, on the Infinite Person, and the active and passive obedience of the Saviour, with such perspicuity, authority, and heavenly influence as to produce in the whole congregation a lively mood of grateful wonder and adoration, blending all hearts together in such spiritual sympathy that all with one accord could testify, "Behold how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together, in unity." He continued this journey to the following year, 1786, and by the end of it, having covered a large tract of country, he was able to arrive at an accurate estimate of the intellectual state of the country, but the contemplation of which very much distressed him. There was scarcely a neighbourhood within the

* "Essays on the Causes of Dissent," etc., p. 31.

whole tract in which one out of every twenty of the population could read the word of God, while there were some localities in which it was difficult to find a single person so far advanced. To remedy this deplorable state of things, it struck him very forcibly that circulating schools exactly on the model of those of Griffith Jones should be at once revived. He set himself with all his heart and soul to organize a general movement in the matter. For it was evident to him, that although the people, in several places, had been won to get pleasure in listening to the gospel, and like the hearers of John the Baptist to rejoice for a time in its light, they would still remain in comparative ignorance of its true beauty, until they could read the Bible for themselves, and some means were instituted to indoctrinate them in its essential truths. He applied in every direction for help to put his idea into practice—now he would submit his scheme to the kind consideration of friends in England, at another time he sought the co-operation of men of heart and means in Wales, and on the whole, his appeals were not made in vain. His plan was to send a teacher to a certain locality and keep him there just long enough to enable as many as were willing to learn, young and old, to read Welsh pretty fluently, and then remove him to some other neighbourhood to repeat the process. He began with only one teacher, but ere long, through the generosity of friends, who poured in their subscriptions in a manner that both astonished and gladdened his anxious heart, he was enabled to increase the number of his agents to twenty. From six to nine months, was generally found sufficient to teach a child to read his Bible, which is a much shorter time than is required to learn to read English, because of the simplicity of the Welsh alphabet—each vowel and consonant having but one sound to represent, except in one or two instances. It must be also remembered that these schools were altogether confined to teaching the reading of the Bible, and that in Welsh only.

Before establishing a circulating school in a locality, Mr. Charles would first of all visit the place, call a meeting of the inhabitants together, and impress upon their minds the importance of having their children taught to read the word of God. Then he would signify his intention of sending a teacher to them, who, without fee or reward, would instruct all that were willing to come to him, on week-days, or in the evenings, or on the Sabbath day. Direct-

ing afterwards his appeals more pointedly to parents, he would urge them to send their children to school, promising to give books gratuitously to all that were too poor to purchase them.

He was very careful in his selection of masters, lest he also should be pained with similar disappointments in them, to which Madam Bevan was so undeservedly subjected. As a rule, they were men of humble circumstances, and the salary they received only ranged from £12 to £15 a year. In this respect, they were more suitable to the humble sphere in which they were intended to labour. But although the remuneration which they got was miserably small, the moral qualifications which they should possess were to be unmistakably excellent. In describing them to a friend, he says, "That it was necessary they should be men of moderately good parts, humble, well-conducted, and of winning ways, not proud, lazy, or talkative; but above all, they must, as far as could be judged by their life and conversation, be godly men."

In addition to this, he supplied each with a copy of the Rules of Conduct, which he was expected to observe on entering upon any charge. He was to receive no fees for instructing any child—not to be burdensome to any of the parents—not to go to any house to eat and drink, unless specially invited. When he remained at a house for the night, he was expected to read and pray with the family before going to rest, and also before he left on the following morning. In the course of his stay he was to lead the conversation, as soon as practicable, to his own special duties and avocation; and to be careful, on no account, to let it drift into vain and useless talk; such conduct was intended as an example to families how a Christian ought to live, and what should be his demeanour towards his neighbours. One can easily judge of the beneficial effects which soon followed the labours of a band of men endowed with these special qualifications. By teaching the people to read, new ideas burst upon their consciousness; a new start was given to their mental faculties; sermons were better understood and appreciated; a thirst for general knowledge was awakened; from the cultivation of Welsh, the study of English followed; but the chief aim of the teacher was to be, the bringing of the people to a saving knowledge of God in Christ. And in fact so it proved; for in a comparatively short time it is said, "that the whole aspect of the country was marvellously changed."

It is easy to conceive the vast amount of labour which devolved on Mr. Charles to start and support these circulating schools throughout the country. First of all, he had to fix upon the locality and enlighten the inhabitants on their duty of accepting and patronising the school; then he had to fix upon a suitable teacher for the school, and in not a few instances to train teachers for the work in which he wished them to be engaged. Further, it was his commendable practice to visit the schools as often as he could, in order to encourage the teacher in his work, as well as to keep up the zeal of the people, by holding a kind of public examination or exhibition of the progress of the scholars, which went by the general description of *catechising*. The most arduous work of all, however, probably was to collect the necessary funds in order to keep the important machinery a-going; and in his case the committee, collector, secretary, and treasurer, met in one man.

The sources whence the contributions came were both numerous and various. In this respect, he himself gave the best example of liberality, as well as of untired assiduity. All he got from his own ministry was devoted to this purpose, while the wants of his own family were being supplied from the profits of his dear wife's industry. The several congregations throughout the country always readily responded to his appeals for subscriptions—at Bala, the whole collections on Communion Sundays always went to this treasury. Once he received £50 from an unknown contributor, but in the great majority of cases, he had to write to different persons to solicit aid, which always required long explanations in introducing the subject, and the gratefulness of his heart did not allow him to be brief in his acknowledgment, much less to make use of a printed stereotyped form as is now in vogue. In the year 1798 we find a letter of his in the *Evangelical Magazine*, acknowledging the receipt of £30 from a person bearing the initials G. T. G., who, though unknown, could not be allowed to go unthanked. In the October number of the *Drysorfa Ysprydol* (*The Spiritual Magazine*) for 1800, he and Rev. T. Jones, of Denbigh, acknowledge the receipt of the sum of £470, being a legacy bequeathed by D. Ellis, in the parish of Helygen, Flintshire, towards this object. Respecting this money he wrote, "It has been left to us, in trust, chiefly to support the free schools. Only one has as yet been established in connec-

tion with this bequest, and that in the parish of Cilcen, but we intend very soon to add to the number."

The society formed in London about the year 1800, by some ladies of rank and charitable gentlemen, to aid poor curates and vicars in Wales, who having large families had been reported to them as receiving very scanty stipends, devoted some of its funds to aid the circulating schools. Mr. Charles had been chosen as agent to dispense this charity. There is a letter extant, written to him in June, 1802, by the secretary of the society, in which he acknowledges the receipt of the particulars showing how the sum of £500 had been distributed to aid indigent churchmen, and in support of the schools. "We wish to assure you," says the secretary, "that we are very sensible of the great trouble and care you have taken in this business. Still, we trust it will be happy to you as it will be satisfactory to us, if other similar occasions will enable us to desire your further benevolent agency." From other letters and direct evidence we find that Mr. Charles continued this labour of love for many years, and that considerable sums of money from time to time passed through his hands. His biographer remarks, with reference to this department of Mr. Charles's labours, "that he thus gave proof that, although the Church of England had shut her doors against him, he was very far from being an antagonist either to her, her ministers, or her ministrations."

In the year 1808, Mr. Charles complains that "all the annual aids from England had almost simultaneously ceased except one." This arose from the circumstance that after the establishment of the Bible Society the English friends of the circulating schools, finding the Welsh able to contribute so largely towards that society, thought their support was no longer needed. Though that was hardly the case, matters had then come to such a state that their discontinuance did not prove a very material loss. Sabbath Schools being now multiplied throughout the whole country, the need of day schools to teach reading only was becoming less and less urgent, until after a flourishing existence of about twenty years they disappeared altogether. During this period it is estimated that Mr. Charles paid on an average the sum of £200 annually in salaries to teachers. We have already seen that it was no small labour to provide this sum, and hardly less again was it to pay it personally

to between fifteen and twenty persons living in different parts of the country at least quarterly, in most cases, monthly.

Before entering more fully into the connection between the circulating schools and the system of Sunday Schools which sprung out of them, as an interesting summary of some of the details already mentioned, we shall bring this chapter to a close by inserting some letters written on different occasions by Mr. Charles himself, describing his proceedings.

The first is to a lady in England, written in 1796, acknowledging a subscription from her towards the schools. "In travelling," says he, "through different parts of the country, more than nine years ago, I found that extensive districts in the mountainous parts of North Wales were sunk in the deepest ignorance. The number of those who were able to read was very small, and equally few were those who had the word of God in their houses. I seriously began to consider how it would be possible to remove so great an evil, and I could think of no other plan which was likely to answer the purpose than to set schoolmasters to work according to the aid which I would receive, and send them to dark districts to teach freely all who would come to them to read the Bible in their own language, and to instruct them in the first principles of the Christian religion. By the help of kind friends to whom I made known this plan, it was set on foot, and it has succeeded far beyond my expectations. The demand for schoolmasters has gone on increasingly, and there is a manifest change in the sentiments and morals of the people where those schools have been at work. I established Sabbath and night schools for the sake of those who were too much engaged or too poor to avail themselves of the day schools. The attempts which I have made in this direction have been marvelously successful. The country is filled with schools of one kind or another, and all are taught simultaneously. And there are blessed results following the instruction—a great and deep interest in spiritual things has been awoken in many localities; many have been made sensible of their sinful state and of their need of Christ, and are now, I have every reason to believe, His faithful followers. The schools have now been in operation for nearly ten years, and the results are similar in a greater or less degree. The number of teachers has been increased or diminished according to the means at my disposal. All that I get for my ministry I devote to this

purpose, while the wants of my own family are provided for by the industry of my dear wife. At present I pay £12 per annum to each schoolmaster. They remain in the same place from six to nine months, and are then removed to another locality. We find that nine months is amply sufficient to teach the children to read their Bibles fluently in the Welsh language. I visit the schools myself, when I catechise them publicly, and have the unutterable pleasure of seeing the general aspect of the country marvellously changed. The desert blossoms as a rose, and the dry land has become streams of water. By means of schools and the preaching of the gospel religious knowledge spreads in every direction. Bless the Lord, O my soul ! ”

The course taken by Mr. Charles to supply the want of schools amongst his countrymen is also described in two letters written by him in 1811, to Mr. Anderson, of Edinburgh, one of the secretaries of the Gaelic Society, then in progress of formation.

“ Soon after I assumed the care of the parish,” he says, “ I attempted to instruct the rising generation by catechising them every Sunday afternoon, but their not being able to read I found to be a great obstacle to the progress of my work. This induced me to inquire into the state of other parts of the country, and I soon found the poor people to be, in general, in the same state of ignorance. Two or three of the children of the wealthiest were sent to the next town to learn English, and this was all ; the generality were left totally destitute of any instruction. As Mr. Jones’ schools had ceased to circulate, no relief could be obtained from that quarter. A thought occurred to my anxious mind, for so it really was, that by the charitable assistance of some friends I might be able to obtain means of employing a teacher, and to remove him from one place to another to instruct the poor ignorant people. When I had succeeded in obtaining pecuniary aid, the great difficulty of obtaining a proper person to teach occurred. This difficulty was removed by instructing a poor man myself, and employing him at first near me, that his school might be, in a manner, under my constant inspection. The next difficulty was to obtain proper elementary books. In this point Mr. Jones’ schools were very deficient, as the books used in his schools were little better than the English battledores, and very ill calculated to forward the children in their learning. This obstruction also was gradually

surmounted. I composed three elementary books, besides two catechisms, which are now used in all our schools, and very essentially assist the progress of the children.* My teachers, as my funds increased, multiplied gradually from one to twenty; but of late the number has decreased, as the necessity of the week-day schools is superseded by the increase of Sunday Schools, and my attention is drawn to the extension of those as widely as possible. The circulating day schools have been the principal means of erecting Sunday Schools, for without the former the state of the country was such that we could not obtain teachers to carry on the latter; besides, Sunday Schools were set up in every place where day schools had been. My mode of conducting the schools has been as follows:—My first and greatest care has been in the appointment of proper teachers. They are all poor people, as my wages are but small; besides, a poor person can assimilate himself to the habits and mode of living among the poor, as it is his own way of living. It is requisite he should be a person of moderate abilities, but above all that he be truly pious, moral, decent, humble, and engaging in his whole deportment. Not captious, not disputatious, not conceited, no idle saunterer, no tattler, nor given to the indulgence of any idle habits. My care has been abundantly repaid, for my teachers in general are as anxious as myself in the success of the work, and the eternal welfare of those they are employed to instruct in their most important concerns. In introducing a school into a place I pay a previous visit there, after conversing a little with some of the principal inhabitants on the subject, I convene the inhabitants together, after having sent a previous message to them, intimating my intention of visiting them and specifying the time of my coming. When convened together I publicly address them on the vast importance of having their children taught to read the word of God; and afterwards I inform them of my intention of sending a teacher to assist in

* Griffith Jones published, both in Welsh and English, expositions of the Church Catechism, divided into the following parts:—

The Christian Covenant (Baptism).

The Christian Creed.

The Christian Duty (the Commandments).

The Christian Prayer.

The Christian Sacraments.

These are still found in many schools of Wales, where they have proved extensively useful.

instructing their children, and also grown-up people who cannot read, who will attend him on Sundays and as many nights in the week as they please. I conclude by exhorting the parents to send their children to school. I converse familiarly afterwards with the parents, and promise to assist them with books if they should be too poor to buy any. I take kind notices of the children also; and thus in general we are kind friends ever after the first interviews. The teacher is to take no entrance money; is charged not to encroach upon them and intrude upon them, unless particularly invited into their houses; and then he is charged to have family prayers night and morning wherever he goes to reside for a night; to introduce conversations respecting his own work, and not to indulge himself with them in vain, idle talk; that in him they may see how a Christian lives, and how they ought to live. His time is entirely at my command, and to be devoted wholly to the work; he is engaged in the evening as well as through the day, and that every day. Before the school is removed I go there twice, if possible, and examine the children publicly; these public examinations and catechisings I have found most profitable to the parents and grown-up people. I have often seen them exceedingly affected by the intelligence and proper responses of the children. Before I leave them I exhort them to prevent the children from forgetting what they have learnt; to further their progress in learning, now they have happily begun, and this they generally comply with. At first, the strong prejudice which universally prevailed against teaching them to read Welsh first, and the idea assumed that they could not read English so well if previously instructed in the Welsh language, this, I say, proved a great stumbling-block in the way of parents to send children to the Welsh schools; together with another conceit they had, that if they could read English, they would soon learn of themselves to read Welsh; but now these idle and groundless conceits are universally scouted. This change has been produced not so much by disputing as by the evident salutary effects of the schools, the great delight with which the children attended them, and the great progress they made in the acquisition of knowledge. The school continues usually at one time in the same place six or nine months, which depends on local circumstances, the number of children, and the progress which the children make. (Here Mr.

Charles enters at length into the argument for teaching the vernacular first, and English after, the reasons adduced in the main agreeing with those of Rev. Griffith Jones, already quoted.) I have of late turned my attention more than ever to the aged illiterate people in our country. On minute inquiries I find there are many who cannot read, and of course are very ignorant; though I had before given general exhortations on that head, and invited them to attend the schools, but with very little success. At last, I determined to try what effect a school exclusively for themselves would have. I fixed upon a district where I had been informed that most of the inhabitants above fifty years of age could not read, and I prevailed on a friend to promise to attend to teach them. I went there, after a previous publication being given of my coming—published the school, and exhorted them all to attend. My friend went there, and eighteen attended the first Sunday. He found them in a state of most deplorable ignorance. By condescension, patience and kindness, he soon engaged them to learn, and their desire for learning soon became as great as any we have seen among the young people. They had their elementary books with them whilst at work, and met in the evenings of their own accord to teach one another. Their school is now increased to eighty persons, and some of them read their Testaments, though it is not three months since the school commenced. Children are excluded from this school, but we have another school for them. The rumour of the success of this school has spread abroad, and has greatly removed the discouragement which old people felt in attempting to learn from the general persuasion that they could not learn at their age. This has been practically proved to be false, for old persons of seventy-five years of age had learnt to read in this school to their great joy."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOUNDING OF THE WELSH SUNDAY-SCHOOL SYSTEM.

How the circulating schools were developed into Sabbath Schools—The *place* of the first transformation not known—*Time* ascertained within very narrow limits—One school started by Charles prior to, and independent of, the system—This not improperly considered the parent school—*Place* of starting accurately, *time* approximately, known—Collateral evidence respecting date of system—Oppositions encountered at the outset—Mr. Charles's conciliating spirit—His labours in preparing suitable text-books—His, "Instructor in the Principles of the Christian Religion"—A specimen page—Other unpublished papers, called "Pwngc Ysgol"—A specimen—His Scriptural Dictionary—The rapid development of the system accounted for.

It is a well-established fact that the Welsh Sunday-School system was developed from the circulating schools. Mr. Charles's own testimony is conclusive evidence on this point. In the letter written to the Secretary of the Gaelic Society, already quoted, he says, "The circulating day schools have been the principal means of erecting Sunday Schools, for, without the former, the state of the country was such that we could not obtain teachers to carry on the latter; besides Sunday Schools were set up in every place where day schools had been." It would have been interesting to be able to point out the particular school, which after the expiration of its six or nine months' existence as a circulating school, first assumed the more hallowed, as well as more permanent form of a Sunday School. The traveller when standing on the bank of a noble river, which from the size it has attained, tells him of a course of several thousand miles run over, and which he doubts not has fertilized many an extensive country, or drained many a

flourishing valley, besides being the means of communication between distant inland towns, and of commercial intercourse for an immense population, is naturally curious to trace the stream upwards to its tiny source; so also is our curiosity excited to be able to follow up the succession of Sunday Schools in the Principality, which have so gradually grown, assumed such imposing and orderly proportions, and have produced such incalculable benefits for the population, to that simple and unpretentious assemblage to which all must owe their origin. In this, however, our curiosity is doomed to remain ungratified. The two important elements of particularity—the place *where* and the time *when* the first Sunday School of this system in Wales received a “local habitation and a name,” are involved in obscurity. At the same time, it is not difficult to discover the particular *mode* in which this transformation or development took place.

The same need for the day school to be supplemented by the Sabbath School as existed in Jenkin Morgan's school, held at Ty'n y fron, near Crawlom, Llanidloes, was soon experienced in connection with Mr. Charles's institutions. The process of development there has been already described in these words; “At first this was but a day school. The master, however, soon noticed that many of the adults who were thirsting for knowledge wished to attend school with the children, but found it incompatible to attend to their different avocations, and school, at the same time. To meet their case it was arranged to hold a night school every Wednesday evening, and another school on Sunday evenings also.” This is precisely what took place in connection with Mr. Charles's circulating schools. In the letter written to a lady in England in 1796, he says, “I established Sabbath and night schools for the sake of those who were too much engaged or too poor to avail themselves of the day schools.” Comparing these two quotations together, we can infer pretty accurately, how the first Sunday School of the system instituted by Mr. Charles was inaugurated. When the circulating school was fully established, and adults began to desire to enjoy similar privileges with the children, the schoolmaster opened a night school for their accommodation, and finding that their thirst for knowledge was not thereby sufficiently satisfied he supplemented those two with the *Sunday School*. The people would be the more anxious to get the last

fairly started, inasmuch as they knew that the master should be removed from them at the end of his six or nine months' residence. This view entirely harmonizes with Mr. Charles's further statement respecting the progress of the work. "The attempts which I have made in this direction," he adds, "have been marvellously successful. The country is filled with schools of one kind or another, and all are taught simultaneously." The meaning of this we take to be—that in one and the same locality there would be a day, a night, and a Sunday School, until the former two becoming extinct by the removal of the teacher to another locality, left the latter as the only and permanent institution. These being established in connection with small congregations already partially enlightened by hearing the Gospel preached, and the Word proclaimed, will account for the readiness with which the movement was taken up; and the fact that those who were scholars in the circulating schools became zealous teachers in the Sunday Schools, will account for the rapidity with which the system was developed and extended all over the country. There is no record, however, so far as we are aware where the *first* circulating school was started, and it is equally uncertain whether that first one, was supplemented by a Sunday School or not. The probability is in favour of the former alternative, from what is known of the previous history of Mr. Charles making use of the Sabbath day to promote the religious instruction of the rising generation.

But with regard to the *time*; by comparing the references in several of Mr. Charles's letters, we can arrive at very narrow limits within which Sunday Schools must have been started. Some of these dates appear irreconcilable, but with closer attention to the wording the disagreement is found to disappear. For instance, in one of the letters already quoted, bearing the date 1796, he says "that more than *nine* years ago he was travelling through different parts of North Wales." From the portion of his history already recorded, however, it is ascertained that he made his first preaching tour in 1785, but as he renewed his itineracies in 1786, he evidently intends the expression "more than nine years" to cover all his tours of those two years. Writing to a friend in London in 1808, he says, "In my travels through different parts of North Wales, about twenty-three years ago (*i.e.* in the year 1785), I found that the condition of the poor of

the country generally was so low with regard to religious knowledge, that scarcely one in twenty in several places could read the Scriptures, and in some parts after making further inquiry, it was difficult to find as many as one having been taught to read. I had then, and I now have, daily proofs of the ignorance of the poor people who cannot read, and who never were instructed in the principles, yea in places where there is no lack of preaching regularly. In seeing this I was more grieved than I can relate, and it caused me to search in earnest meditation for some speedy and effectual remedy to remove the misfortune. Subsequently to this, I put before a few friends a proposal to begin a subscription towards paying the salary of a schoolmaster, and that one to be removed from place to place in a circuit to teach the poor to read, and to instruct them in the most important principles of Christianity by catechising. *This work commenced in the year 1785* (the italics are ours). At first only one schoolmaster was engaged, but as the aids increased, the schools were multiplied until they reached twenty in number. I myself had to teach some of the first schoolmasters, and they in turn became preceptors to others, whom I sent to them, to learn to become schoolmasters."

In this letter we get Mr. Charles's direct testimony, that not only was the ignorant condition of the country found out in 1785, but the first circulating school was also started in that year. But how to reconcile this with the statements that it was in 1786 the schools were established? In the letter of 1796 he states "The schools have been now in operation for nearly *ten* years," and in a letter written in 1803, he says "The schools are as flourishing as ever, now established seventeen years." The statements are perfectly consistent, if we attend to the exact wording. The first circulating *school* was started in 1785, in connection with which he distinctly states that only *one* schoolmaster was engaged. The other expressions refer to *schools*, from which it is inferred that by 1786 all the schools had become pretty general in certain districts, for he also states that the night and Sunday Schools were worked simultaneously with the circulating. The general conclusion at which we therefore arrive is, *that it is almost certain Sunday Schools were become pretty general in 1786, and that it is very probable the first was started in 1785 in connection with the first circulating school, which according to Mr. Charles's positive statement, was begun in that year.*

Our inquiry in the above disquisition has been confined altogether to the Sunday Schools which sprung from the circulating schools. There is, however, conclusive evidence of an isolated school having been started by Mr. Charles even before he left the Church of England, when the notice for the termination of his curacy at Llanymowddwy had not fully expired. With regard to the steps which led Mr. Charles to start this Sunday School, his biographer, Mr. Morgan, of Syston, furnishes us with some details. "His active mind," says he, "would not allow him to be wholly unemployed. The ignorance which prevailed among the young people at Bala excited his sympathy. He invited them to his



MR. CHARLES'S HOUSE AT BALA.

house to give them religious instruction, and to catechise them. His want of employment led him to this work of love, for which he then probably acquired that taste and aptitude which afterwards rendered him so distinguished, and his labours in this way so beneficial to the whole country. His mode of treating the children was peculiarly kind, affectionate and attractive. The love and tenderness with which he addressed them melted them often into tears, his house became soon too small to contain those who attended. He was offered the use of their chapel by the Calvinistic Methodists, who were then, and for a long time after, connected with the Established Church, as the Methodists were formerly in

England. This offer he accepted; and there he instructed and catechised the numerous children that attended. The work was the delight of his heart. This was, in fact, the commencement of Sunday Schools, being anterior in time to any established in England. How long it was before he finally made up his mind to connect himself with the Methodists, is not known. It was at the end of the year 1784, or the beginning of 1785, that he commenced preaching among them."

In the light of later investigations, it is found that there are several points out of harmony with facts in the above extract. First, assuming that this school was instituted by Charles in the year 1784, it could not even then be earlier than Raikes's, which, it is agreed by all now, was started in 1780. Then, Mr. Charles's at Bala could not have been the first Sunday School in Wales, of the system now in vogue there, for that was but an isolated instance, taught by one man, and not at all on the model of those which arose soon after, in which several teachers assembled in one place to teach youth and adults, and to form classes for mutual instruction. Finally, it is a well-ascertained fact that it was towards the end of the first half of the year 1785, that Mr. Charles joined the Methodists, soon after which event the circulating schools were organized, and since the Sunday School system arose out of these, the parent school could not have been started before the latter half of 1785. Still, there is no impropriety, following the example of Mr. Morgan, in calling that first effort at Bala, the parent Sunday School of Wales. No great invention or discovery reached its full maturity or development at once; and since in Mr. Charles's person, all the schools which rose after, have a connecting link with the one carried on in the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel at Bala, and prior to that in Mr. Charles's room; and assuming also, which is more than probable, that this good work was undertaken when his connection with Llanymowddwy had not been quite severed, then the *place* and *time* of the origin of the Welsh Sunday Schools are fixed, viz. AT THE TOWN OF BALA, IN THE YEAR 1784.

Having discussed at such length the probable time that circulating and Sunday Schools were organized by Mr. Charles, there is scarcely any further need to correct the errors into which other historians may have fallen. In fact, we are aware of only one, Dr. Rees, who

disagrees with our conclusion, and he only by three years, preferring 1788 to 1785. In fixing on the former date, however, he grants that he must suppose Mr. Charles's own memory to have failed him in the letter he wrote in 1808, and that some of his other manuscript letters must have been mutilated by his biographers! * But there are several other collateral proofs of the fact that Sunday Schools became very general soon after the establishing of the circulating schools, and in connection with some of them it is amusing to notice how the smallest and remotest corners aspire to the distinction of having actually first given birth to the idea. It has been published that the first Sunday School in the remote parish of Trawsfynydd, in the county of Merioneth, was started in the summer of 1787, and that another was started about the same time in the neighbouring parish of Festiniog. In the simple and unsophisticated account given of the starting of the former of these it is stated, "that the originators were afraid of meeting Mr. Charles who soon after came to preach to the place, lest he should reprove them for engaging in a work inconsistent with the sacredness of the Sabbath day. However, when he came, they related to him with fear and trembling what they had done. For a while he remained in deep meditation, but at last said, 'Indeed my friends, it is a good work; persevere in it and I will give all the support I can to assist you.' From this interview he received the suggestion; he roused the country; and Sunday Schools were established before long throughout the land." From other sources it is known that some of the above statements are facts; others are more the result of simple credulity and innocent ambition than malicious falsifications. Instead of this school being self-originating as intimated, from reliable sources we find that schools in the neighbourhoods of Festiniog and Trawsfynydd were copied from those on the Bala side, and that brethren from this district came over every Sunday to assist those labouring with the newly-established branches. It is far from being true, too, that Mr. Charles knew not of Sunday Schools until 1787, whereas he says himself that they were general in 1786, and in fact he had been engaged in Sunday teaching at Bala in 1784. The sole value we place on the extract is that from the date mentioned it is just to infer that if schools had been established in remote villages and rural districts in 1787, they must

* "History of Nonconformity in Wales," p. 420 note.

have been started in towns and other places near Mr. Charles's home, in 1786 if not 1785. That he spoke the words of encouragement to the brethren attributed to him is quite consistent with his kindly disposition and ardent zeal in the cause. This, in fact, was what he did in hundreds of places throughout the whole country, and this remark leads us to enlarge on the multifarious labours which fell to his lot in perfecting the important movement, and furthering its extension.

Though the circulating schools had prepared many to assist in Sunday School work, still it was no easy work to row against the wind and tide of opposition which impeded their progress. There were the evil customs of the country to be eradicated, for on the Lord's day at this time, games and revels were the order of the day with many of the young people, and not a few adults in most parts of Wales. Besides, even professors of religion had to be reconciled to the movement. Many delighted more in going about to hear sermons on a Sunday afternoon than to be engaged in active teaching, some conscientious brethren regarding instructing others as secular work and therefore forbidden by the moral law. They put the matter in this light—that they reckoned it as sinful to teach the mechanical art of reading on Sunday, as if they should take the plough to the field in spring, or the scythe and the sickle in harvest time. Mr. Charles met all this opposition in a mild and conciliating spirit. His own personal holiness carried great weight to win the people over to his ways, and when the weaker brethren perceived that the most intelligent and influential men in all places were heartily co-operating with him, all prejudice gradually disappeared altogether. Ere long, almost the whole population began to find pleasure either in learning or teaching, and with the lapse of time, being enabled to judge of the tree by its fruit, they blessed God because He had put in the heart of his servant to introduce such beneficent institutions into the country.

Like the Jews who were building the second temple, bearing a sword in one hand by which to defend themselves from their enemies, and in the other the tools to build therewith the walls of the city and the temple, so Mr. Charles at the same time that he was defending the new institutions from the attacks of opponents, had also to provide the means by which to secure their progress. To make a school, it is not enough to have pupils and teachers, text

books also are necessary in order to guide the classes in their studies. Rev. Griffith Jones had in his time prepared a few, but Mr. Charles disapproved of these, as being too much on the model of translations from the English, and therefore he prepared at least three books directly for the use of the circulating and Sunday Schools, chiefly the latter. The first was the *Sillydd*, or spelling-book, being a graduated series of lessons for learning the Welsh language, to which were added some practical hints on morality and good behaviour. This passed through many editions, the fifth being published by Mr. R. Saunderson of Bala, in 1834. Though very popular at one time, it has now been entirely superseded in all the schools of Wales. The next was the *Hyfforddwr*, or Instructor, and the other, *Eglurhad byr ar y Deg Gorchymyn* (A Short Exposition of the Ten Commandments). The Instructor is a Catechism on the most important doctrines of the Christian religion. The author was thoroughly convinced of the importance of grounding the people well in the doctrines of Christianity, for writing to a friend in the year 1808, he says, "These examples prove the need there is for ministers and teachers of all denominations to labour in spreading the knowledge of God by catechising, as well as by public sermons. I find that the expressions generally used by us in preaching are not intelligible to a great part of our congregations because of their ignorance of Holy Scriptures. Let whoever will take the trouble to inquire, and he will soon find out the truth of what I say." To assist in this work, he spared no labour in preparing the best book he could produce. In it he was eminently successful, for next to the Bible his catechism is the best known work in the language. The first edition was published at Trefecca, in the year 1789, the second at Wrexham, in 1791, the fourth in 1806, and the sixty-second in 1877. There are thousands of the youth of the denomination to which he belonged, of both sexes, who have learnt it by heart, though it contains 84 pages 12mo of very small type. The author bestowed particular attention to perfect the work, which is seen from the emendations introduced to the various editions, and from the different titles it bore since its first issue. In the first edition its title is, "A Compendium of the Principles of Religion; or a Short Catechism for children to learn." In the fourth edition, it is called, "A Short Catechism; or a Compendium of Evangelical Principles," and some time after the

fourth, it has assumed its permanent name of "Instructor in the Principles of the Christian Religion." Besides a change of matter, a different classification, and an improvement in expression in the different editions, the number of chapters also varies. In the first edition the number is eleven, in the fourth ten, in the twelfth and all subsequent issues, seventeen. In the first edition, too, a shorter catechism was appended to it, containing questions on some passages of Scripture, suitable for children unable to read, so as to lead their minds gradually to the doctrines treated in the longer catechism; but in later editions this has been altogether omitted. Such was the demand for these three books of Mr. Charles at the time, that between the years 1803 and 1814, 320,000 copies were printed and circulated.

This work in its perfected form has been translated into English by the late Rev. D. Charles, D.D., a grandson of the author. As it may interest the reader to get a notion of the catechism which has been of so much value to the Sunday Schools of Wales, especially of one denomination, we here subjoin a portion of the sixth chapter, on

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST.

Q. 89. What is the meaning of the name Jesus?

A. A Saviour. "For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke ix. 56.

Q. 90. From what does Jesus save his people?

A. (1) From their sins. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. i. 21.

(2) From the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal. iii. 13.

(3) From temptations, afflictions, and the power of Satan. "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. x. 13; 2 Peter ii. 9.

Q. 91. What is the meaning of the name Christ?

A. Anointed.

Q. 92. By whom was he anointed?

A. By God the Father. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Heb. i. 9.

Q. 93. With what was Christ anointed?

A. "With the Holy Ghost and with power." Acts x. 38.

Q. 94. What does Christ's anointing imply?

A. His appointment to and qualification for the offices of PROPHET, PRIEST, and KING, to his Church. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. lxi. 1; Matt. iii. 11; John iii. 34.

Q. 95. What does Christ perform as a prophet?

A. He teaches his people. "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." Acts iii. 22; Deut. xviii. 15.*

Mr. Charles published an abridged form of the Welsh "Instructor," in English, which he describes as "A short Evangelical Catechism, containing the First Principles of Christianity." In 1808, he issued a third edition, and the preface is interesting as containing the author's testimony to the good effects produced by the Welsh and English editions in their respective forms. "This short catechism," he says, "was first composed for the use of our charity and Sunday Schools in Wales. It has been (and continues to be) learnt by thousands of our poor children; and I have reason to believe that the truths contained in it have been understood, and savingly embraced by many in their younger days, some of whom continue to sustain an unblamable character, and to adorn the gospel by a corresponding holy conversation; others, we hope with confidence, have entered into rest and the joy of their Lord. The favourable reception it has met with, and the continual application for it, have induced me to send it forth a third time in an English dress. That the Lord would graciously bless with success every attempt to instruct the rising generation in the knowledge and practice of divine truths is the daily prayer of—T. CHARLES, Bala, January 29, 1808." Then follows the testimony of Sir Richard

* "The Christian Instructor," pp. 20, 21.

Hill, Bart., in favour of the work, in which from the date, it is evident that he refers to the first two editions. "Hawkstone, April 3, 1807. I have repeatedly and attentively read the following little catechism, and every time I have done so, it has been with fresh satisfaction and delight. Herein are all the glorious truths and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel comprised in a very narrow compass, and that in so plain and experimental a manner as the poorest and most unlearned may, by the blessing of God, be made wise unto salvation. Having said this, more would be quite unnecessary. I therefore only add, that the piece (independent of my own personal knowledge of and high esteem for the pious worthy author) has my entire approbation and recommendation, together with my best wishes and prayers that it may prove effectual to the conversion, edification, and comfort of the readers into whose hands it may fall. (Signed), R. HILL."

In the end the author adds a postscript in which he describes the method adopted in teaching the scholars and testing their knowledge by public catechising. "The foregoing questions and Scriptural answers," he says, "are here published as specimens to exemplify the method adopted among us in the Principality in the further instruction of the children of our schools. After they have learnt this little catechism, questions are proposed to them, and they themselves are to adduce apposite Scriptures to elucidate and prove them. To some questions they have replied in the very words here put down without any previous notice or time for search, which clearly proved their knowledge of the truth, and their familiar acquaintance with the sacred writings. To others they have had a month or more time to prepare their answers. Previously to our adoption of this method, they have been in the habit of being frequently catechised, and of learning and repeating chapters out. Hundreds can repeat whole epistles, scores of chapters, some of them even to the number of two hundred. The method here exemplified has been attended with great delight and improvement to the young people; and as these questions are proposed, and the answers repeated publicly before numerous congregations, it has also been attended with no small profit in the instruction of the large assemblies collected on those occasions."

He has added seven chapters, each containing "a few examples of questions answered by the children without any assistance, in

different places." With regard to the first question inserted, "What proofs have you of the being of God?" he says that when he asked the question in a certain place, one little boy replied, "I stand!" "I asked him," he adds, "Could you not stand if there was no God? He replied 'No.' Q. 'Is it God that supports you?' A. 'Yes.' Q. 'Is it God that supports all things?' A. 'Yes.' Q. 'Is he not weary in supporting all things?' A. 'No; there is no weakness in Him that He should be weary.'"

The subjects of the seventeen chapters into which "The Christian Instructor" is divided are—God, etc.; The Creation; The Fall of Man, etc.; The Person of Christ, and the Covenant of Grace; The Two Covenants; The Offices of Christ; Faith and Justification; The Work of the Holy Spirit (two chapters); The Law; The Sum and Substance of the Law; The Means of Grace and the Ordinances of the Gospel; The Sacraments; The Lord's Supper; The Resurrection and Exaltation of Christ; The General Resurrection; The Day of Judgment.

Besides this published manual, Mr. Charles prepared a great number of short papers called *Pwngc Ysgol* (School Theme), which he would send to different schools to get up by the time he came round in his accustomed visits. This *Pwngc Ysgol* was much the same as what is now known under the name of "Notes of a Lesson," and only differed in the mode of using. At present the teacher reserves his notes for his own guidance exclusively, but with Mr. Charles copies were multiplied and supplied to a whole school to exercise in before his arrival. When he came, a special service was arranged to publicly catechise on the subject. Many remarkable meetings are recorded to have been enjoyed in different parts of the country, full of heavenly unction, and producing lasting impressions on the minds of all present with regard to the importance of the duty inculcated, for Mr. Charles was always eminently successful as a public catechiser. These papers were not printed, but written out for the use of one school only; several, however, have been preserved, and lately some of them have been published in the Sunday School periodical, *Cronicl Yr Ysgol Sabbothol*. The following on "Envy" may serve as a specimen:—

Q. What is envy?

A. 1. Envy is a feeling of sorrow to see another prospering; for example:—

- (1) In riches. Psalm lxxiii. 2, 3; Genesis xxvi. 14.
- (2) In respect and eminence. Dan. vi. 4.
- (3) In doing good, and uprightness. Eccles. iv. 4.
- (4) In being loved. Gen. xxxvii. 4, 11; Acts vii. 9.
- (5) In religion as regards talent, usefulness, approbation of man and recognition by God.

2. Or to feel glad on perceiving another's trouble, or some misfortune befalling him. Prov. xvii. 5; xxi. 10; and xxiv. 17; Psalm xxxv. 15, 26; and xxxviii. 16.

Q. Does God in his word speak against envy?

A. Yes. Prov. xxiv. 1, 19; Gal. v. 26; Psa. xxxvii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 1.

Q. What considerations show the heinousness of this sin?

A. (1) That envy arises from vanity, pride, and ignorance. 1 Tim. vi. 4.

(2) That it leads to strife, confusion, etc. James iii. 16.

(3) It is a sign of men serving their lusts. Titus iii. 3.

(4) It is a rottenness to the bones. Prov. xiv. 30.

(5) It kills. Job v. 2.

(6) A man under the dominion of envy knows nothing of charity. 1 Cor. xiii. 14.

(7) It is worse than wrath and anger. Prov. xxxvii. 4.

(8) What one from envy wishes and intends for another is most likely to come upon himself. Ezek. xxxv. 11; Psa. vii. 15; Prov. xxvi. 27; Psa. lvii. 7; compare Esther v. 11-14 and vii. 9, 10.

(9) Miriam was struck with leprosy because of this sin. Num. xii. 1, 2, 9, 10.

(10) It was for envying Moses and Aaron that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed alive into the earth. Psa. cvi. 16, 17. Num. xvi. 1, 3, 30.

(11) It is a devilish sin. James iii. 14, 15.

(12) It shuts out of the kingdom of heaven. Gal. v. 21.

Another work edited by Mr. Charles, and mostly composed by him also, was a Scriptural Dictionary, which has been of inestimable value to the Welsh nation. It contains articles on the various books of the Old and New Testaments, explanations of geographical and historical references, expositions of the more difficult passages of Scripture, besides an exhaustive *resumé* of various doctrinal

points, making up, in fact, a complete body of divinity. The work is remarkable also for its simple and lucid style, and next to the authorized version of the Bible has contributed most to preserve the present purity of the Welsh language. It proved a rich store of knowledge for the Sunday School teachers and ministers of the past generation, and is hardly being superseded by more extensive works of later date. This was the last great literary work of its author, having been completed in the year 1805. At first it was published in four volumes, on very rough paper, in rather a primitive fashion. By the year 1877, it reached its seventh edition, published in a single handsome imperial octavo volume of 932 pages. With regard to the subjects treated therein, it approaches more nearly to Dr. Fairbairn's Biblical Dictionary than Dr. Smith's Bible Dictionary; like the former taking up doctrinal subjects, but much shorter and less critical than the latter.

Endowed with these few and simple text-books, under the active superintendence of their illustrious founder, the schools rapidly prospered, and in quick and uninterrupted succession were multiplied in all directions. When a school had been established in one locality, the inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlet would soon become apprised of its beneficial effects, and at the mere beck of any one, like the man of Macedonia in the apostle's vision, calling for assistance, a number of volunteers from the older institution were ready at once to start what was called a "branch school," taking the charge of its management until it became self-supporting. In the multiplication of the schools, the prophecy of Isaiah was actually fulfilled, "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." And not only would branch Sunday Schools thus be established, from the school before long the nucleus of a congregation would be formed, ultimately ending in the organization of a Church. Some of the most flourishing causes in the country at the present day, have gone through all the various stages now implied. Possibly beginning with a Sunday School in a farmhouse, before long a suitable schoolroom was erected, then in addition to a school held one part of the Sunday, a sermon was arranged to be preached occasionally, until the final stage was reached in the building of a commodious chapel with all arrangements complete, "for the edifying of the Body of Christ."

How true is the analogy between this multiplication of Sunday Schools and the spread of the celebrated banyan of India, which has been described as—

“Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree.”

One human agency only remains again to be noticed, in accounting for the rapid spread of the schools, namely, the noble band of workers who co-operated with the illustrious founder, and to these we shall next direct special attention.

CHAPTER IX.

CHARLES'S COADJUTORS.

These better known than those of Mr. Griffith Jones—*Two* selected as specimens—Reasons for the selection—The first, Rev. Owen Jones of Gelli—His early life—Aptitude to teach shown from his youth—His Sunday School at Aberystwith—Remarkable revival originating in it—A painful parting—Removes to Llanidloes—Labours at Shrewsbury—Settles in Montgomeryshire—Faithful with Sunday Schools to his death—His catechism and peculiarities of style—The second, Rev. Lewis Williams of Llanfachreth—One of Mr. Charles's schoolmasters—His conversion—Sets up a school of himself—Novel and original methods of instruction—Interview with Mr. Charles—Appointed schoolmaster—The different localities of his labours—A successful elocutionist—His character as a preacher—A warm supporter of every good cause—His death-bed charge—Another eminent co-worker in South Wales, Rev. Ebenezer Richard of Tregaron—His contributions to the success of the movement—A remarkable instance of ignorance—The relation of the different denominations to the work.

IN the history given of the great land and sea victories of the world, the common soldier and the subaltern officer have too often been forgotten in the eulogies bestowed upon the illustrious commanders-in-chief, so also the host of humble but indefatigable workers who so effectually carried out Mr. Griffith Jones's and Mr. Charles's plans for the enlightenment of their country are apt to be forgotten in the great lustre which necessarily surrounds the memory of the great organizers. But the moral victory over the darkness and degradation of those times is due almost as much to the co-operation of those devoted workers, as to the power of thought and capacity of painstaking which characterized the originating and presiding geniuses. Even the *names* of most of Griffith Jones's staff are not mentioned in any extant record, and the few who are

mentioned, such as Jenkin Morgan of Crawlom, near Llanidloes,* and Henry Richard, the father of the two celebrated ministers, Revs. Ebenezer and Thomas Richard, who, in 1767, came to keep one of the circulating schools from Pembrokeshire to Llanaber, near Barmouth, † though worthy of a longer memoir, have been dismissed with only an adventitious remark. Others, such as Robert Jones of Rhoslan, ‡ who have secured a more extensive notice, did so, not because of the value set upon their praiseworthy efforts as teachers, but because they have reared, as it were, their own monuments in the literary works which they produced, or distinguished themselves in other pursuits, which their contemporaries were either more willing or abler to appreciate. More attention, however, having been bestowed in Wales, during the last fifty years, upon the history of its intellectual and religious movements, the names of more of Mr. Charles's teachers and co-workers have escaped oblivion, but of the great majority of them, little else than their names is known in their pedagogic career. We have much pleasure, however, in being able to reproduce a few incidents in the lives of two of his most successful coadjutors, and as these two may be looked upon as typical of scores of others, their history will be serviceable in elucidating points in the progress of the work which have been only hinted at in connection with Mr. Charles himself. The two persons to whom we refer are Rev. Owen Jones of Gelli, Montgomeryshire, and Rev. Lewis Williams of Llanfachreth, Merionethshire. One was engaged exclusively in building up the Sunday School system, and entered upon his labours without any direct inspiration from the master mind; the other was at first one of Mr. Charles's schoolmasters, and conducted in various places the usual process of developing the temporary day school into the permanent Sunday School. The former was a gentleman of varied talents and considerable mental powers, whose labours and success were second only to those of the founder himself; the latter is an example of what faithfulness, simplicity, and burning zeal for the good cause are able to perform, even when unaccompanied with any special gifts, except the inventiveness generated by love. Both began as laymen, and gradually enlarged their spheres of useful-

* See p. 158.

† "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. i. p. 519.

‡ See p. 164.



REV. OWEN JONES, GELLI, MONTGOMERYSHIRE.

ness by becoming ministers of the gospel; but their mode of action is only a type of the course adopted by hundreds of young men during their time and since, some following through all the stages they went through, and others remaining teachers only, but all, in whatever capacity they appear, wholly devoted to the interests of the heaven-born institution. Proceeding to enter more minutely into their history, we shall begin with

REV. OWEN JONES OF GELLI.

He was born at Towyn, in Merionethshire. His father's name was John Jones, of Crynllwyn, near that town; his mother's name was Elinor, and she was the daughter of a respectable farmer, from the neighbourhood of Aberllefenni, in the same county. When between seven and eight years of age, he was placed under the tuition of Mr. John Jones of Penyparc, one of Mr. Charles's schoolmasters in the neighbourhood, who is described as an able and devoted teacher, an earnestly religious man, and whose memory is held in great regard with the oldest inhabitants to the present day. His young pupil showed much aptitude to learn, and was endowed with a very retentive memory. He delighted much in the study of Scripture, and very soon was able to take up the more essential doctrinal subjects. Unlike most of his fellow pupils, whenever his master asked him, he was but too glad to abandon his play and accompany him to the religious services which he had organized in the town and the houses of the neighbourhood around. From Mr. Jones's he went for a short time to a school at High-ercal, near Shrewsbury, in order, according to the custom of those days with the middle class, to perfect himself in the English language. Not long after his return, there was an occasion for his former master, Mr. John Jones, to leave home for a time, and he asked young Owen Jones, though he was a mere lad at the time, to undertake the superintendence and instruction of the school during his absence. Here he adopted the custom, which he had seen carried out with so much success by Mr. John Jones, of simultaneously catechising the children at the end of the afternoon school, in the various subjects which they had been studying during the day. In this exercise, he accidentally, as it were, discovered a power hitherto latent in him, of being able to excite the attention and keep up the interest of those who came within range of his questions, by the liveliness

of his movements and earnestness of his manner. This faculty, further strengthened and developed by years of experience, rendered him before he was thirty years of age, one of the most efficient public *viva voce* examiners of his day.

He was, however, not permitted to engage for any length of time at present, in daily teaching, by which he might have more rapidly improved his talent; for his father intended him to be a saddler, and with that view apprenticed him to learn the trade in the town of Aberystwith. Not long after beginning his term here, the Rev. W. Williams of Cilycwm, Caermarthenshire, to whom reference has already been made,* and who had been instrumental in starting Sunday Schools in more than one locality before, paid a visit to Aberystwith, probably like many others at the time, as a seaside resort for the benefit of his health. One Sunday during his sojourn there, whilst walking through a suburb of the town still known as Trefechan, he was grieved to see a number of people of all ages idling about the lime-kiln, and delighting in practices which shocked him as being palpably at variance with the sacredness of the day. Burning with zeal to benefit the people, he first of all sought out a room which he might hire, and having succeeded in his inquiry, prevailed upon a number of Sabbath-breakers to accompany him to the room, where for two Sundays he acted as their teacher, imparting unto them the little religious instruction they were capable of receiving. By the third Sunday his stay in the town was bound to come to an end, but being anxious that the work should be continued, he looked about for some one of a kindred spirit to take his place as its foster-parent. He heard of a young lad called Robert Davies, who was already connected with a small school in the town carried on by the Calvinistic Methodist denomination. Going to him he got him to promise to superintend this school, and he called to his assistance his cousin, Owen Jones of Towyn (they were sons of two sisters), now a saddler's apprentice in the town. The two young men devoted themselves heart and soul to the work, though at first they had no idea of its surviving more than a few Sundays. So thought their enemies too, and with a view of hastening its demise, they began to despise and mock the young men in their humble efforts. But this small beginning was destined by God to bring about mighty results.

* See p. 160.

The number soon increased to about eighty scholars, and many who at first looked upon the movement as an experiment only, now joined and rendered what assistance they could command. One man offered a new and more convenient room to hold the school, another supplied coals for the winter, and gave money to purchase books. Besides the ordinary Sabbath work in the school-room, the young men held classes in different houses throughout the town in rotation, every evening of the week except on Saturday. Jones's happy style of questioning attracted a great number of scholars of all ages to the school, and the earnestness of his appeals to the consciences of his catechumens, produced a deep and lasting impression. Singing also held a prominent place in their curriculum, which proved another source of considerable attraction. It is not known which of the two cousins was the older, but Jones is supposed to have been between seventeen and eighteen years of age, and though they had for some time now advanced from the mere mechanical labour of teaching the alphabet and simple reading to the inculcation of religious belief and practice upon their scholars, and opened and closed the meetings of their school by prayer, still, strange to say, neither of them had himself made an open profession of religion. In order to be consistent with their practices, and to obey the dictates of their own conscience in a matter of plain duty, they offered themselves as members of the Calvinistic Methodist Church in the town, and were readily accepted. Their labours and success with the Sunday School at Trefechan were sufficient letters of recommendation to ingratiate them to the favour of the Church, and the simple narration in the church-meeting of their zeal in doing good, had the natural result of animating the whole fraternity with a kindred feeling. But this feeling was more manifest among those under their special charge and tuition. As a focus of activity and missionary zeal the school of Trefechan was a pattern to the whole town.

A dark cloud, however, was now imminent over the happiness of teacher and taught, for Jones's father, ignorant no doubt of his son's peculiar relations to the Sunday School, and thinking he had then profited enough from his instruction in the saddler's trade, sent him an intimation that he must return at once to his home at Towyn. The prospect of separation was a great trial, not only to the teacher, but equally great to the scholars; and hundreds

besides, to whom he had become greatly endeared in the town, were much grieved to think that his valuable services were thus to be so abruptly terminated. He had, however, no intention of trying to evade the parental authority. An evening was appointed for holding a farewell meeting with the scholars, but other and greater things than had been anticipated resulted from the meeting. Dwelling on their near separation, he prayed long and earnestly that God would grant the gift of life everlasting to his dear scholars, so that whatever separations they might endure here below they should be citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, "Where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths have no end." Whilst, like Jacob, thus wrestling for the blessing, such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit was experienced that all present forgot things earthly and, in the realization of their hope, great rejoicings broke out similar to what characterized the revivals of those times. The feeling spread among the crowd which had gathered around the house. It now became too difficult for him to leave the town at once, and he got permission from his father to prolong his stay. The prayer-meetings were continued from evening to evening; the religious fervour of the few pioneers at Trefechan was shared by the members of the congregation of the chapel to which they belonged, and within a very short time eighty members were added to the church. This awakening was not confined to the suburbs and town of Aberystwith, but soon spread with similar results over a district of fifty miles in length and twenty in breadth. An Association of the Calvinistic Methodists was held at Aberystwith while this revival was at its height. Mr. Charles, writing to the *Evangelical Magazine* of May, 1805, thus describes its nature and effects, tracing its origin to the humble efforts of Jones and Davies with the Sunday School:—

"I am glad to say that there is a happy revival of religion in some parts of Wales. At Aberystwith and the neighbouring districts there is a general and mighty awakening among the young people and children, and some hundreds have joined the religious societies in those parts. I was lately at an Association of the Calvinistic Methodists at Aberystwith, and it was estimated that the multitude assembled together, amounted to at least twenty thousand. It was a happy sight to a Christian. The sermons were with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. There

were hundreds of children from eight years old and upwards to be seen in the congregation listening with as much attention as the most earnest Christians, and bathed in tears. This work began in a Sunday School which was conducted by two young men. Soon after the commencement of this school, both teachers and scholars were brought under deep impressions, and the work has now spread over a district extending fifty miles in length and twenty in breadth. In going along the road it is pleasant to hear the ploughmen and the lads who drive the horses singing hymns at their work. There is nothing else to be heard all over the country. This I can testify with gratitude and joy."

The day for Owen Jones to leave Aberystwith at last arrived, which indeed was not more than six weeks beyond his father's first arrangement, and the parting was as difficult then as on the first attempt. A large procession, consisting of his Sunday-School pupils, and many men and women from the town, accompanied him for some miles on his journey in the direction of Borth. When they could proceed no farther, instead of turning round at once to retrace their steps, they remained fondly gazing after him until he was out of sight, and saw him fall on his knees three times to pray for those whom he was leaving behind, and to whom he was so greatly attached. He did not remain for a long time at Towyn, for the same year, 1805, we find him at Llanidloes, prosecuting the duties of his trade in the day time, and in the evening and on Sundays as diligently engaged in instructing and catechising the young. Here he was instrumental in infusing new life and vigour into many a school established some time before, but now languishing for want of support, and also in establishing many new ones. Very often he travelled from fifteen to twenty miles on foot on a Sunday morning, in furtherance of the cause which he had so much at heart. He inherited this great physical energy from his father, for it is recorded that he once walked from Shrewsbury to Towyn, a distance of seventy-two miles, in one day. A prominent element in his mental constitution was great fixedness of purpose, and this feature, coupled with his remarkably persuasive manner, made his success as a promoter of schools almost certain beforehand. It is related of him, going to the country one Sunday to visit one of his schools, that he overtook some boys who had been in search of crows' nests; Mr. Jones at once, in his own irresistible

style, asked them to be so kind as to accompany him to the Sunday School, and not to persist in following a work so cruel in itself and so directly opposed to the sanctity of the day on which they had met. The boys could not refuse complying with his request, though they had young crows then in their pockets, but they were afraid every moment lest they should be betrayed by them. It appears that the boys were as much in Mr. Jones's power as the crows were in theirs. While residing at Llanidloes, he extended his labours as far as Rhayader on the Wye, where he planted a school which numbered in a very short time 240 members. When he found parents indisposed to send their children to be instructed, he showed how well he understood human nature, in that he would ask permission to bring a number of his scholars to their house that he might catechise them in their hearing. He hardly ever found ocular demonstration to be ineffectual. Like the American who wanted to sell his clocks, but never put the matter in that form, only asking permission to be allowed to leave one in the house for a time, knowing, however, that the clock would make a place for itself and secure an ultimate purchase, so the invariable result of Mr. Jones's bringing the school to the parents would be, to get the parents to send their children to the school.

From Llanidloes, Mr. Jones went for short intervals to pursue his trade in London and other places, settling down for a longer period, in October, 1807, while yet only twenty years old, at Shrewsbury. His first idea when he came here was to organize a school for the Welsh, but failing in this object because they were few and much scattered in the town, he went from house to house to invite the English to come together. He succeeded in establishing an English Sunday School, numbering from a hundred to a hundred and twenty scholars, which continued to flourish as long as he remained at Shrewsbury. On leaving, he transferred it to the charge of Rev. Mr. Nunn, the incumbent of St. Chad's, and it became the nucleus of a Sunday School in connection with that Church. While living at Shrewsbury it was his regular custom to travel far into the country on Sundays, to visit the different schools which he had either founded himself or had renewed from a languishing state. The young people in each school were arranged to repeat chapters of the Bible by heart, in the hearing of Mr. Jones by the time he came round, and from this arose the good

custom of repeating chapters at the beginning of most religious services. His public questioning after, was always much enjoyed both by the members of the school and by others who were present as mere spectators. While pursuing these educational excursions, he became pretty well acquainted with the state of the marches between England and Wales, especially in the county of Montgomery, for thitherward he mostly turned his footsteps, which district became afterwards his special field of labour for the remainder of his life. He very often visited a farmhouse, called Perthi, not far from Welshpool, where a Sunday School was kept under the superintendence of Mr. John Evans, the master of the house. A chapel was afterwards built near the place, called Tabernacle. The people during his first visits used to call him "the young man from Shrewsbury," and he retained his popularity with them as long as he lived. He made a short stay at Towyn again before settling in Montgomeryshire, at which town he began to preach, and also instituted the first district meetings in that part of the country which afterwards became an essential part of the system. In the spring of 1808 he married a Miss Jones of Gelli, near Llanfair Caereinion, in Montgomeryshire, which occasioned his removal to his wife's home, and here he spent the remainder of his life, attaining to some eminence as a preacher of the gospel, but never forgetting the exercise of his talents as a catechiser and organizer of schools. His visits to different parts of Wales in his itineracies as a preacher, were as much appreciated for the new spirit and vigour which he always infused into the Sunday Schools, as for the enjoyment and blessing derived from his style of preaching the everlasting Gospel. There are many instances on record in which schools, both in North and South Wales were looked upon as having a new lease of life extended to them, from Mr. Jones's visit on his evangelizing and catechising missions. Mr. Owen Jones composed a catechism in Welsh, much on the same plan as Mr. Charles's English "Short Evangelical Catechism." This was printed and published at Bala in 1820; the author's introductory letter serves to show its object and the state of Scriptural knowledge at the time. He addresses it to the Sunday-School teachers in the following words: "Though our schools in these days are numerous in attendants, both of young and old, who evince a great desire to obtain knowledge, and great

provisions have been made from time to time to supply them with useful books, still, on noticing the work done by the schools, I thought that I saw a considerable number of children after finishing the first catechism compelled to stop many years without being able to proceed to take up "The Instructor," and many adults also are in a similar position. Noticing this deficiency, my mind was inclined to undertake the work of compiling a few questions and answers in a manner easy to be remembered, not to take the place of the smaller or larger catechism, but to be in the middle between them, so that all grades may be able to travel together in their labour of acquiring Scriptural knowledge. That it should be useful for such end is the wish and prayer of your sincere friend, OWEN JONES, Gelli.—March 11, 1820."

His catechism did not attain to much popularity, though no doubt it supplied a want for a time. His own living voice and impressive style were necessary to supplement the dead letter of the written questions; and his memory was cherished for years as *facile princeps*, among the coadjutors of Mr. Charles, for his ability to produce interest, sympathy, and deep impression, upon the minds of both adults and children by his style of public questioning.

The other representative of the labourers of that day, whose history serves to illustrate many of the peculiar circumstances in which the work was carried on, is

REV. LEWIS WILLIAMS OF LLANFACHRETH.

He was one of Mr. Charles's schoolmasters. The character given to his teachers in general, is specially applicable to him; "My first and greatest care," he says, "has been in the appointment of proper teachers, and it has been abundantly repaid; for my teachers in general are as anxious as myself in the success of the work, and the eternal welfare of those they are employed to instruct in their most important concerns." We are indebted for most of the particulars in the following sketch, to the pen of the late Mr. R. Oliver Rees of Dolgelley, who in his interesting account of "*Mary Jones, the little Welsh girl without a Bible*,"* which he published in a little volume, has inserted the chief

* See chap. xiii.

incidents in the life of Lewis Williams, because he was her teacher at the time of her memorable journey to Bala. These particulars were supplied by the old teacher himself. We also had the privilege of making this genuine Christian's acquaintance during his later years, and can attest the truth of his biographer's remarks.

Lewis Williams was the child of humble parents, having been born at Penal in the year 1774. Like all the boys of those dark times, he gave himself up during his youth to all kinds of sinful practices, especially on Sundays. When about eighteen years of age, whilst learning the trade of a shoemaker, in the neighbourhood of Cemmaes, Montgomeryshire, he happened to be present at a prayer meeting, where Mr. Jones of Mathafarn was reading the fifth chapter of Romans and making observations thereon. The reading of the chapter produced deep, and to him very strange, impressions on his mind. And when Mr. Jones came to the words, "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation," the truth pierced his heart like a deadly weapon. He fell into a swoon and was conveyed out of the room as a dead man. When he recovered consciousness, he felt as a criminal sentenced to die. Overwhelmed by this feeling, his attention was directed to the opposite truth, "Even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." A ray of the Mediator's glory and of the greatness of the atonement shone into his darkened understanding, so as to give him a measure of ease. He always looked back upon this incident as the great turning point of his life. He wished to join himself to the little church which the Calvinistic Methodists had established at Cwmlinian. Thinking that money would be an indispensable qualification for admission, he delayed presenting himself as candidate until he had saved about half a crown. On the evening of the church meeting he approached the door of the farmhouse, where the little flock was assembled. For a while he stood still as in a strait, and then with a shaking hand he ventured to knock at the door. One of the brethren opening the door, accosted him with the query, "What do you want here, my boy?" "I want to be admitted to your society if you will allow me," he said; "here's half a crown for you—all that I have in the world, for coming, if you will let me."

"Coming! my dear son," said the janitor, "Yes, keep your half-crown, you are heartily welcome to us, for nothing." He was asked further by the fraternity, "What if Jesus Christ should require you to do something for him in the world, would you be willing to do it?" "O yes," said he, "I would immediately do whatever Jesus Christ should ask of me." In this reply is found a key to Williams's character and subsequent life to his grave.

Some years after this, when serving with some relatives of his, in a farm near Llanegryn, he began to feel keenly for the ignorance of the youth of that village. He determined to try and establish a school on Sundays and week-day evenings for teaching them to read. He himself had not enjoyed a single day of either Sunday or day-school instruction, and could hardly at this time read one word accurately. And still, in the greatness of his zeal, he intended to teach the children what he was no adept in himself. Such, however, was his tact to influence young people, that they flocked to his seminary. He did not know that there was anything like a Sunday School throughout the whole country at the time, except that of Mr. John Jones of Penyparc, near Towyn, who greatly excelled him in scholarship. Williams's teaching methods were very peculiar, and undoubtedly original. He taught the alphabet to the lowest class by causing them to sing it to the tune of "*The March of the Men of Harlech*," which he had learnt when engaged as a militiaman. Moffat is reported to have adopted a similar plan to teach the Bechuanas, and so successful was he at one time that the children of one village learnt the whole English alphabet in a day and night by singing it to the tune of "*Auld Lang Syne*."

But the greatest feat of the Welsh teacher's genius and zeal was his recourse to make readers of his highest class when he was so backward in the art himself. In his emergency he became acquainted with a kind and pious sister of the name of Betty Eyan, and before the commencement of the school on Sundays or week evenings, he would be found resorting to her to be drilled in the lessons fixed for the class. At other times he used to invite a number of boys from the Llanegryn endowed school, who could read Welsh well, to a reading competition in his house, for a trifling reward. The portion selected as the field of competition would always be again, the lesson fixed for the class in his own humble school. He carefully observed how they pronounced every syllable, and profited much

from the discussions which would often arise amongst them respecting the right sound and proper emphasis of a letter or sentence. Of course he was the adjudicator, and what is most wonderful in the whole transaction to relate, his decision always satisfied the competitors, who were never led to suspect his qualifications for the post which he had assumed for himself.

It was customary in the one Sunday School with which he was acquainted, to begin and end the meeting by prayer. How was he to preserve order with such wild and undisciplined Arabs so as to perform these devotional exercises with becoming decorum? For this purpose he brought into requisition his knowledge of drilling which he had acquired when serving with the militia. They very readily, of course, conformed with his request to take up the play of "little soldiers," as he termed drilling, and when after several evolutions, he came to the "*Stand at ease*," and "*Attention*," he would offer a short prayer on their behalf to heaven, which was speedily followed at the end, with the "*Quick march*" of dismissal.

When Lewis Williams was thus engaged in the double vocation of farm-servant and master of his own scholastic institution at Llanegryn, a monthly meeting of his denomination was held at Abergynolwyn, in which Mr. Charles was to be present. The evening before the meeting, Mr. Charles lodged with his own hired schoolmaster at Brynecrug, Mr. John Jones of Penyparc, a young man of greater attainments and wider reputation than most of the schoolmasters of that age. In the course of conversation, Mr. Charles inquired of Jones, if he knew of any other young man in those parts qualified to become a master in one of his schools. He replied that there was a young man at Llanegryn who was very active and painstaking with the children on Sundays and some evenings of the week too; but as he understood he could not read himself, he was afraid he could not be of much service as a schoolmaster.

"A young man able to teach children to read, without being able to read himself?" interposed Mr. Charles.

"So they say," added Jones.

This was a mystery which Mr. Charles could neither comprehend nor believe; he therefore requested Jones to send to this inexplicable young man, asking him to attend the monthly meeting at Abergynolwyn, on the morrow. Lewis Williams presented himself

accordingly, his primitive appearance betraying anything but the scholar and preceptor.

"Well, my young man," said Charles, "they tell me that you keep a school at Llanegryn on Sundays and week evenings, to teach children to read. Are there many children attending those meetings?"

"Yes, sir; more than I am able to deal with successfully, sir."

"Do they learn a little with you?"

"I think some of them do, sir."

"Do you know some English?"

"Only a few words, which I heard with the militia, sir."

"Can you read Welsh well?"

"I can hardly read at all, sir; but I try to learn my best."

"Were you in school at all, before entering on service as farm labourer?"

"No, sir; I never had a day of schooling, sir."

"Did not your father and mother teach you to read at home?"

"No, sir; my parents could not themselves read."

Mr. Charles opened the New Testament upon the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and desired him to read the first verses. He made the attempt and succeeded in getting over the monosyllables by spelling every word, but all other words proved quite insurmountable to him, although he got occasional help from John Ellis, of Barmouth, who whispered some of the longest words behind him.

"That is enough," my son, "that is enough," said Charles; "but it is quite beyond my comprehension to be able to understand how you teach anyone to read. Tell me, my son, how you manage to teach those children of yours to read."

The modest teacher gave him the particulars of a system of didactics—the singing of the A B C; the preparatory lessons from Betty Evan; the reading competition of the grammar school boys; the playing of "little soldiers;" the praying, and all;—such a totally original system of teaching that neither Mr. Charles, nor any school board since, has ever heard of its like. But the fact still remained, as true as it was wonderful, that the young, illiterate, zealous teacher had by it succeeded in teaching scores of the poor children of Llanegryn to read.

Notwithstanding all unfavourable appearances, Mr. Charles dis-

cerned in this simple, rustic, and illiterate young man, the materials for a teacher in one of his circulating schools. He plainly saw that his will and desire to do good were much greater than his power; and that he only needed more power, that is more learning, to make him "a good soldier" of Jesus Christ, and a faithful and useful schoolmaster for him. He urged him to place himself for a while under the tuition of the able teacher, Mr. John Jones, at Brynecrug, about two miles from Llanegryn. Thither he resorted, as often as circumstances permitted him, for about a quarter, and that was all the day school education he ever enjoyed. So great was his eagerness to become a schoolmaster under Mr. Charles, that he bestirred himself to make the best use of his leisure hours in order to qualify himself in the simplest branches of knowledge, especially the art of reading. He had heard the expression frequently used in those days, to describe the highest perfection in reading—"to read like a parson." He therefore, very often attended the parish churches of Llanegryn and Towyn, to hear the parsons read, that he also might learn to articulate and emphasize Welsh as they did.

About the year 1799, he was engaged by Mr. Charles to be a schoolmaster in one of his schools at the salary of £4 a year, and he further gave him lessons and instructions to qualify him for his duties. In the year 1800, he was stationed at Abergynolwyn, and there Mary Jones was one of his pupils at the time of her memorable journey to Bala, to get a Bible. He had, therefore, every opportunity to learn from herself at the time, as well as from Mr. Charles after, all the particulars of her visit to him.

In his movements as a schoolmaster from place to place, he was instrumental in establishing new Sunday Schools and resuscitating declining ones in many localities. This latter state of things was the case at Dolgelley. A Sunday School had been started here by the former schoolmaster, John Ellis, but the opposition shown by the most influential members of the Church assembling at the "old chapel" to keep a school on the Lord's day, had proved fatal to the struggling cause. But Lewis Williams restarted it when he came to keep a school here in 1802, though he was sternly resisted by all the Church leaders, except one. It was the custom to begin the first public service at nine o'clock in the morning. He therefore arranged to hold the school meeting at six o'clock. Ere long

the opponents removed the Church meetings to that early hour. He then removed the school to the still earlier hour of four o'clock. Between sixty and eighty children attended at those early hours. Whilst he was almost exhausted, rowing as it were against these contrary winds, his patron and protector, Mr. Charles, came to the town on one of his usual preaching publications. Here he was told about the peculiar circumstances of his favourite institution, and calling the Church officers together, warmly advocated its claims, ultimately succeeding, though evidently against their innermost feelings, in procuring it a place amongst the regular meetings of the sacred day, and to commence at nine o'clock. From this recognized position it never after was disturbed. The oppositions which Lewis Williams and the Sabbath School had to bear here, are only examples of what he suffered in almost every neighbourhood which now boast in him, as the founder of their Sunday Schools.

Williams's delighted sphere of labour was the Sunday School and all its attendant exercises, such as visiting the schools, holding school associations, and preparing the "*pwnc*," or lesson to get up for the occasion. He paid special attention to the art of reading. He considered no part of Mr. Charles's spelling-book exceeding in importance the remarks at its end on punctuation. With much warmth he always maintained that the respect due to them was not to be measured by their length there. He himself was a remarkably clear and emphatic reader. When it is remembered that he was never remarkable for great powers of thought, it is somewhat wonderful to think what light and charm he succeeded in throwing around many a passage of Holy Writ by his clear enunciation of every syllable, and apposite emphasis of most of its deepest expressions. His reading of the chapter at the beginning was justly considered by the audience as about the best portion of the service. He greatly regretted in his latter days that instructions in reading were omitted from the later text-books of the Sunday Schools; and he maintained that the direct result of this was seen, in a generation of public readers who degraded this most divine portion, to be the least interesting and least instructive, of all the parts of the services of the sanctuary.

In the earlier part of his career of labour with the Sunday Schools, he often witnessed "the power from on high," attending his catechising exercises. His labours were very abundant during

the religious revival of 1817-18. The heavenly flood at times overflowed even into the day schools. Often would he leave off the more secular lessons in order to catechise the children in the saving truths of the gospel. Whenever this course was adopted, the children around him, participating in the ruling spirit of the days, would always break out into rejoicings (gorfoleddu). He often felt himself in the heavenly mood to join them. But such was his anxiety, lest any of the children should come by some bodily harm, that he said "he never could find time to rejoice himself." As the lambs are frisking about, the old sheep must diligently browse in order to find them means of support.

When he first began to preach, he did not know. Having such burning zeal for the Sunday Schools, and all other portions of the Lord's work in the various places where he sojourned, in connection with the circulating schools, he would often be called "to speak a word," in the prayer meetings; but some time in the year 1807 he came to be considered a "preacher" or "exhorter." In the year 1817 he was formally received a member of his monthly meeting, with his son in the faith, Rev. Richard Roberts of Dolgelley; and Rev. Richard Jones of Bala. He was but a small, proverbially small, preacher, but different from the majority of his little brethren he believed it. He was the standard of little preachers for surrounding districts. If any other of the same calibre arose, his standing would be fixed as "poorer than Lewis Williams." But being an eminently pious man, his influence was felt wherever he went, and often were great results seen to follow his humble ministrations, exemplifying the well-known promise, "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Several of his sermons were never forgotten by those who listened to them.

As a bookseller, too, he was eminently active and useful to the good cause. For about fifty years he was the means of circulating a vast amount of the best literature of his days, over a considerable district. The catholicity of his spirit is shown by the fact that he had no *hobby*, but readily lent his co-operation to further every organization of which he was satisfied that it had a beneficial tendency. He took part in the first collection towards the Bible Society in that district in the year 1805. From that time, until his death in 1862, wherever he dwelt, he never once missed the

privilege of collecting, except in 1861, when he was totally unable to cross his threshold. He had been quite deprived of his eyesight some years before his death. Nevertheless, every year as before, the venerable patriarch was seen, going about from house to house, in the arm of another collector, as zealous and loquacious as ever, to replenish the coffers of his favourite society. Not less faithful was he in his labours on behalf of the London Missionary Society, whose claims were first recommended to his sympathy by Mr. Charles. He was also amongst the first to enlist under the banner of the Temperance Society at the end of the year 1836. His pledge to continue faithful to this new movement was conditional—as long as he should continue to believe that total abstinence was from God. He, however, continued to believe so, and to support the principles of the society with Christian zeal and fidelity until the day of his death.

Having entered rather minutely hitherto into the principal incidents of his life, only a few remain to make up a complete record. In 1819, whilst residing at Dolgelley, he entered the married state, and his wife proved “a help meet” and a “crown” unto him by her thorough sympathy with him, in all his temporal and spiritual labours. In 1824, he removed for the fourth time to Llanfachreth to keep a school, having first gone there in the same capacity in 1800. This last time he opened a small business there, of general dealer in country necessaries, and followed up the connection with considerable prosperity,—so much so, that in 1858, the happy couple were able to retire from their worldly concerns and enjoy heaven’s blessing upon their former labours, in peace and tranquillity. He died on the 14th day of August, 1862, aged 88 years. His passage through the vale was remarkably triumphant—the God whom he had so faithfully served, making “the shadow of death” to be a bright daylight with no cloud, even of the size of a man’s palm, between his experience and heaven. A monument has been placed on his grave by means of subscriptions from members of the Sunday Schools of the district in which he had laboured. No one doubted his claim to this tribute, being universally recognized as the father of the school district, and many of its individual schools; its first secretary, and the most faithful worker it ever produced.

This sketch of his life cannot be more appropriately terminated than with the valedictory address to the school meeting of the dis-

trict which he faintly whispered into Mr. Rees' ears, one of the last Sabbaths of his life, and to be conveyed through him to them. "Affectionately remember me to all the brethren. Tell them that my last request for ever to them is, that all should work their best with the Sunday School; ask all to think much better of Jesus Christ as a rewarder. Here am I, having tried to do a very little, as I could, in His service for nearly sixty years—He is by far the best rewarder. It is ready money I always found. He always gave me some feeling that I pleased Him; He could never have given to me a better acknowledgment to my liking. Here's my service now at an end. He owes me not a farthing. Whatever more He has to give me, in the great world whither I am going—grace! grace! grace! grace!" Here his faint voice was overpowered by his feelings; he added no other word to his message, only whispering on to himself, "Grace! grace! grace!"

Amongst the most eminent ministers who co-operated with Mr. Charles in South Wales, both in starting schools and advocating faithfulness in their support, was Rev. Ebenezer Richard of Tregaron. He used to say that he was born in the same year as the Sunday School in England, referring to the general belief then of Raikes's school having commenced in 1782. A native of Pembrokeshire, he settled at Tregaron, Cardiganshire, in 1809, and continued to labour there specially, and in the country generally, for about twenty-eight years. When the Rev. Ebenezer Morris died, in the year 1825, Mr. Richard was looked upon as the Elisha to take up the mantle of the departed prophet. In this the hopes of the people were not disappointed, for he was well qualified to discharge all the duties belonging to the work of the ministry. Eminent as he was for his ability to preach to the great assembly with overpowering effect, he did not think it any condescension to catechise children and go about to advocate the cause of the Sunday Schools, both in his own county, and far and wide throughout the whole of the Principality. Often were the catechiser and the whole school seen bathed in tears, when the examination in some Scriptural topic, previously arranged, was being conducted; for it was the essential aim of these meetings to awaken the conscience as well as enlighten the understanding. The "Rules" which he framed for conducting Sabbath Schools and Sabbath School Unions, and afterwards published, proved very useful in giving a unity to the system,

in facilitating the work of teaching, and in bringing each individual school to feel the strength which is derived from the sense of being an essential constituent of a greater whole. A memoir of this excellent man has been published by his sons, E. W. Richard and H. Richard, the latter being the senior member for Merthyr Tydfil, and author of "The Letters on the Principality of Wales," more than once referred to in these pages. It is no wonder that his zeal for the spread of Scriptural knowledge was so great. Turning, as he was, so much among the people, he often came in contact with pitiable ignorance, and his soul was stirred within him, to support the means which had already been so signally blessed to enlighten the masses elsewhere. There is one instance recorded which occurred to him when going round his pastoral circle at Tregaron. One day he visited an old neighbour of his, of the name of Martha Farrant, who lived in a small hut whose walls were composed of earth, the roof covered with rushes, and the only window that belonged to it, stuffed at the time with rags to keep off the biting blast. After a few introductory remarks, Mr. Richard tried to lead her thoughts to the things appertaining to her eternal salvation, and in his familiar manner said, "The earthly house is getting old and decayed, Martha, dear." "Indeed, it is, sir," said she, "but the beam is pretty strong still." "Yes, yes, Martha," added he, "it is the earthly house of this tabernacle that I mean—this will soon now be dissolved, do you think a little of securing a better home when you quit it?" "Yes, indeed, it will come down before long," she replied; "and as the hens go to the top of it and peck it, the fall will be somewhat sooner, because of that." "I fear," said the minister at last, "that it is very dark with you in matters relating to your eternal welfare." "Indeed it is, sir," said the old woman again; "the wind broke the window the other night, and being obliged to put in these rags to fill the holes, that is the reason why it is so dark with me." It was utterly impossible by pursuing this style of conversation to lead her from the earthly and natural to things heavenly and spiritual. Her case was representative of too many in those days, but thanks to his labours, and those of hundreds of ministers and laymen since his days, such examples of heathenish darkness are very rare now, if found at all, within the Principality.

These coadjutors of Mr. Charles have been selected from within the denomination to which he belonged, and this chiefly because

then, they were foremost in the ranks. It only needs to be added that almost all the other sections of the Christian Church came forth very soon after, to labour heartily in the same direction. The course of opposition and success experienced by one became common to all the others in their turn. Each adopted very nearly the same method of procedure; zealous men belonged to each; each prepared its own peculiar text-books and catechisms; and the common prosperity enjoyed by the system throughout the country is due to the contribution made by each, according to number and influence, to the common cause.

CHAPTER X.

PECULIARITIES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES.

(a) *Members and Subjects of Study.*

Adults as numerous as children—Adult schools the original intention—The first organized by Mr. Charles—The idea copied into England—The Bristol society—Extended to America—Remarkable progress—Adult schools now extinct in Wales—Adult scholars and children together—Instances of adults benefited—Statistics of the present proportion of adults in schools—Liverpool selected as a type—Subjects of instruction—Adapted to attainments of the members—This a source of attraction—A description of a Welsh Sunday School—Contributory causes to this characteristic—Religious controversies between 1707 and 1841—Between Calvinists and Arminians—Between different sections of Calvinists—Dr. Owen Thomas's summaries—Incidents from the life of John Jones Talysarn—Influence of *Traethodydd* on the national mind.

A REMARKABLE proof of the inadequacy of a word in itself to convey the whole idea which it is intended to imply, is seen in the fact that one and the same term is used to denote institutions so widely different as the Sunday Schools of England and those of Wales. It is true they contain some elements in common, but the points of difference are almost as numerous as the points of agreement. The peculiarities of the Welsh Sunday Schools are not things of recent importation; they existed from the time of their very formation; all subsequent adaptations have been but a development of germs which existed in their constitution from the very beginning. We shall here enumerate some of their leading characteristics.

1. *The great proportion of adults which always constituted their members.* This is one of the chief distinctions which separate a Welsh from an English Sunday School; all the rest, as it were, result from this. Dr. Edwards of Bala, in his biographical re-

marks on Mr. Charles, considers this feature as that which constitutes their unique character, as institutions without a parallel in any other country on the face of the earth. "There are," says he, "Sunday Schools in England: and they had begun there earlier than in Wales. Because they bear the same name, many think they are the same in reality. But there is as much difference between them as there was between the Mosaic dispensation and that of the New Testament. The object of the Sunday School in every country except Wales, is to teach children only; and not to teach all children, indeed, as such, but the children of the poor alone, who are unable to obtain education in any other way. The minister, the deacon, and the respectable members of the congregation do not think of sending their children there. The consequence is, that the Sunday School is unknown in places where day schools abound, and are carried on under conditions suitable for the children of the poor, as is the case in most parts of Scotland. As day-school education becomes more general in England, the probability is that Sunday Schools will be discontinued there, unless they are based on higher principles. At any rate a meeting to which all ages assemble on the Lord's day to search the Scriptures, has been hitherto a thing unknown and incomprehensible to every country except to Wales. Perhaps we should not err if we were to state that this is the chief excellence of our nation, and the training of the people in this habit, the most remarkable of the many noble deeds of Charles of Bala."*

What was considered a desideratum in England so lately as the year 1851, was a well-known institution in Wales from the very commencement of its Sunday Schools. Mr. Horace Mann, in his admirable report on the education returns of the census of 1851, remarks: "The senior class is the grand *desideratum* to the perfect working of the Sunday School system, for without some means of continuous instruction and maintaining influence when the scholar enters the most critical period of life, the chances are that what has been already done will prove to have been done in vain. . . . But in proportion to the importance of these senior classes is the difficulty of establishing and conducting them, a higher order of teachers being needful whose superiority of intellect and information shall command the willing deference of the

* *Traethodau Llenyddol*, p. 272.

scholars, while their hearty sympathy with those they teach shall render the connection rather one of friendship than of charity. Such classes, too, will not be long continued with efficiency unless the teacher feels so strong an interest in his pupils as to make their secular prosperity a portion of his care. It is obvious, therefore, that the scheme requires for its complete development more aid from those who are, in age, position, and intelligence, considerably superior to most of the present teachers, and who hitherto have very sparingly contributed their personal efforts to the cause of the Sunday School."

From Mr. Charles's letter to the committee of the Gaelic Society, written in 1811, we find that his original idea was to have separate schools for adults from those of children, several of which, in fact, he actually established. "I have of late," he says, "turned my attention more than ever to the aged illiterate people in our country," etc., etc.* One of his biographers claims this idea as originally and peculiarly his, and like many other projects of this excellent man, was only copied into other parts and countries under modified forms. "After this," he remarks, "Mr. Charles made an effort to awaken professors of religion of every name in that great city (London) to the work of teaching, not children only, but adults also, to read God's word in their own language. In this attempt there is reason to hope that he has succeeded, and that the good seed he sowed has germinated and borne fruit."† In a note to the above remarks we are told that a "History of Adult Schools" was subsequently published by Dr. Pole, in which he refers to Mr. Charles as being their founder. It is interesting to notice from this incident how a good idea once launched into being soon gains strength, and how much alike are the results produced in every clime and among every race. Not long after Mr. Charles made known his success to the world; "The Bristol Society for Instructing the Adult Poor to read the Holy Scriptures" was formed. It is said that in 1813 there were eight schools for men, containing 147 scholars established, and eight for women, with 197 scholars. In the report of the society then published, some interesting instances are adduced of the beneficial results of these schools:—"I heard one of the scholars," reads the report, "who had learned at eighty-five years of age to read the Bible, say that

* See p. 175.

† Preface to "Geiriadur," p. x.

she would not part with the little learning she had acquired for as many guineas as there were leaves in the Bible, notwithstanding that she ranked amongst the poorest of the poor. A converted Jew, who is upwards of eighty years of age, did not know when he came into the school a letter in the alphabet, but in two months he could read tolerably well a chapter in the New Testament. A young man about twenty years of age, who had some knowledge of the letters when he was admitted, but was not perfect in them, in four months was able to read a chapter well. A woman sixty-one years of age, who did not know a single letter when she began, in two months could also read a chapter in the New Testament. A poor woman wanting (to use her own expression) 'only two years of a hundred,' goes daily to the boys' school established in Manchester for one thousand and fifty children, to receive instruction from one of the monitors."*

From England the idea was taken up in America, and there it gave an impulse to the formation of another cognate society, "The New York Sunday School Union," for the instruction of children and adults, which began its operations on the 16th February, 1816. Mr. Prust, of Bristol, who had interested himself in the establishment of adult schools in England, was the means of exciting the Americans to action. He sent to Mr. Divie Bethune, of New York, the narrative already referred to, prepared by Dr. Pole, of their history and progress. They were first established in the city of Philadelphia. Another society which very soon sprung out of them, was "The Female Sunday School Union." It is a curious proof of the widespread influence of Mr. Charles, that in the meeting convened by some ladies of New York for the formation of the latter union, among other communications read explaining the operation of adult and Sunday Schools, two letters from Mr. Charles were read. The first member of the adult school at Philadelphia was a pious soul fifty-two years of age. The young lady who presided over this school adds, with respect to this interesting scholar, "She comes with her spectacles on, and seems as if she would devour the book. She never fails giving us a blessing, and assures us she has long been praying that the Lord would open some way that she might learn to read the Bible."

* "Sunday School Repository," 1814, pp. 414, 415, quoted in "The First Fifty Years of the Sunday School," pp. 83, 84.

Exactly similar results had been produced in Wales some years before this. Mr. Charles refers to several instances in his account of them, which he wrote to the secretary of the Gaelic Society.*

There are ample proofs besides, of the zeal with which adults entered on the labour of learning to read, in connection with both the adult and Sabbath Schools of Mr. Charles, similar to what, as has been already mentioned, took place in the time of Griffith Jones. At Penrhyn-deu-draeth, in the county of Merioneth, it is recorded of an old sister of the name of Catherine Griffiths, who accomplished this feat when actually an octogenarian. She was noted for her piety, zeal, and energy in promoting the cause of her Redeemer, from its commencement in those troublous times. This was about ten years before the Sunday School was instituted there. Soon after it was started, however, she was informed by her pastor, Rev. Robert Davies of Brynengan, who lived some distance from Penrhyn, but who had the oversight of several of the small causes around, that unless she frequented the Sabbath School, and should learn to read her Bible, he would look upon it as a proof of her lack of grace, and that he would soon come to Penrhyn to discard her from Church communion. He said this to prove her, as he firmly believed that, notwithstanding her age, she would make every effort to learn to read rather than draw upon herself Church discipline, and the displeasure of the brethren. "And I well remember seeing her," says the author of *Methodistiacth Cymru*'s informant, "in the Sunday School with her A B C primer, beginning to learn when eighty years of age; and she could read pretty fairly in the New Testament before the end of one year after beginning. She remained faithful and cheerful unto death, and died in peace, old and full of days."† From this peculiarity of the Welsh Sunday Schools of affording the means of learning to read, to so many adults at their very commencement, no doubt arose afterwards, the general custom of attending them to discuss the precious truths of Holy Writ, long after the mechanical difficulty of reading it had been decidedly overcome.

There is no record left, as far as our information goes, of the number of adult schools established in Wales, or how long they continued to be maintained. The progress of general education, and especially the immediate effects of the Sunday Schools on the

* See p. 172.

† *Methodistiacth Cymru*, vol. i. p. 525.

young, gradually diminished the necessity of maintaining them for the sake of learning to read only. Besides, the difficulty of keeping up two organizations, one for children and another for adults, as well as a scarcity of suitable buildings, soon brought about their amalgamation, though, no doubt, to the greater inconvenience of the senior department. A few, from time to time, owing to a lack of early advantages, came in order to learn to read, but the presence of adults in a Welsh Sunday School now, as indeed was the case from a very early date in their history, is due to the higher motive of coming to study God's word for the sake of the inestimable treasures of knowledge contained therein. Consequently, in these days, it is no uncommon sight to see wending their way to a Welsh Sunday School the grandfather and grandson, going hand in hand; and in the same room, in one corner, the little grand-daughter is engaged learning the alphabet, placing her foot as it were on the very first stepping-stone to Scriptural knowledge; while in another corner the grandmother, after a sixty years' course of intellectual and experimental training, still delights to meet the surviving friends of her youth, in the much-loved class. There, as she feels that all earthly possessions and pleasures fail to give her any enjoyment, with greater zeal does she relish the foretaste of heavenly and eternal pleasures as revealed to her in the Bible; and, consequently,

“In this charter reads with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.”

This has ever been the peculiarity of the Sunday Schools of Wales. Native writers, from their familiarity with the sights, have been too apt to pass by this feature unnoticed, while Englishmen, struck with the novelty and strangeness of the fact that old people should still delight in the apparent wearisomeness of learning, never fail to bring it into due prominence. In the book already referred to, “The First Fifty Years of the Sunday School,” it is mentioned as being almost incredible,* “that in one school, three persons upwards of seventy years of age, were seen conning over their lessons, and standing up in the class with their grandchildren. One of those, at that advanced age, underwent a painful operation, from which he recovered. During the confinement

* p. 63.

which it occasioned, he used to engage some of the Sunday scholars to visit him, and to go over with him the lessons they had been taught at school, that his learning might not be hindered. In a school at Bangor, at a very recent period, a class was seen, every member of which wore spectacles." Mr. Lingen, one of the Commissioners of 1846, says that in one of the schools which he visited in the counties of Caermarthen, Glamorgan, and Pembroke, a woman, aged seventy-two, commenced learning the alphabet at seventy, and read a page from an elementary book to him with great accuracy. "In this school," he further states, "there were among the scholars three old women, one upwards of eighty, who, at that advanced age, had learned to read. She was now blind, but attended the school as a listener, and could repeat many psalms."

The great preponderance of adults, constituting the members of a Welsh Sunday School, is seen from various statistics published from time to time. Whether the school be held in the town or country; whether among the hills and dales of the Principality, or by the Welsh people keeping up their nationality and language in the towns of England, this peculiarly-distinctive feature is never lost or even impaired, of which fact we have many striking proofs. In October, 1874, the Welsh Sabbath School Union of the town of Liverpool instituted an inquiry into the number of the Welsh population attending Sabbath Schools, as well as other means of grace, and also not attending. For this purpose the town was divided into districts, and 952 inquirers were appointed to visit every house and individual, who discharged their trust with much fidelity, and at the expense of much labour. The result is very interesting, both as showing the number of the Welsh population in that town, and the love they have for the institutions of their native country, even after being removed amid comparative strangers; and inasmuch as the enumeration was executed in so thorough a manner, it is a safe datum to go upon, in calculating the percentage attending the means of grace throughout the Principality, which is presumably higher than amongst the greater temptations to neglect met with in the town. We shall only quote the figures relating to the Sabbath Schools. The enumerators having classified the scholars into those above fifteen, and those under, it serves also to exemplify another interesting fact—how far the

adult element still predominates in Welsh Sunday Schools, whether held in the towns of England, or amongst the hills and valleys of Wales. The table includes those able to speak Welsh, though from various reasons preferring to attend English places of worship—

DENOMINATIONS.	MEMBERS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.		
	Over 15.	Under 15.	Total.
Welsh.			
Calvinistic Methodists	3954	1717	5671
Wesleyan Methodists	1157	495	1652
Congregationalists	1076	416	1492
Baptists	713	313	1026
Church of England	66	8	74
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	6966	2949	9915
English.			
Church of England	420	589	1009
Wesleyan Methodists	217	215	432
Baptists	171	150	321
Presbyterians	171	113	284
Congregationalists	91	62	153
Primitive Methodists	43	61	104
Roman Catholics	1	5	6
Minor Denominations	13	15	28
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	1127	1210	2337
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Grand Total	8093	4159	12,252

It may be interesting to many, to know the totals of other items ascertained by this enumeration. The whole Welsh population of the town in 1874 was 26,840; of these 16,775 attended Welsh places of worship; 6543 attended English places of worship; 537 belonged to public institutions; while 2985, for whose sake the inquiry was made, neglected public means of grace altogether.* The following percentages, deduced from the above figures, exemplify, to a great extent, the characteristics of the Welsh in these connections everywhere. Eighty-seven per cent. of the whole population attend public worship; over fifty-nine per cent. of the Welsh congregations, and over forty-five per cent. of the whole population, are members of the Sunday School; nearly seventy per cent. of the scholars are above fifteen years of age in the Welsh schools, whilst of the Welsh attending English Sunday Schools, the number under fifteen exceeds those over fifteen years of age. The statistics of one of these schools (the Princes Road Calvinistic Methodist) for 1878, fully confirm the above general conclusion, and also show

* *Goleuad* for 26th December, 1874.

that lapse of years does not materially affect the relative value of the figures. For that year, in this school, out of 683 members, 494 were above fifteen years of age, making a percentage of over seventy-two. Of the whole school, too, 468 were Church members, and the remainder mostly hearers of the congregation.*

Many incidents might be added to those already given, showing the great interest taken by very old people in the institution. One deacon, eighty years old, with his eyesight rapidly failing, in a short speech to the members of his congregation, urging greater fidelity to the Sunday School, said "that he loved it so much that he was determined to attend as long as he could discern his way; and he hoped further, that some one would be found kind enough to lead him by the hand even when unable himself to direct his footsteps; yea more, that he hoped some one would wheel him there when he could not walk, and that he should have the satisfaction of going to his grave from the Sunday School. He very readily conceded that he could not be of much service there any longer, as he could not see to read; still he liked to come there to hear others read, and to take part occasionally in the conversation." The Great King would surely recognise this among his servants even to the end, for with him,

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

Closely connected with the adult element in Welsh Sunday Schools, indeed one of its essential conditions is

2. *The variety and extent of Scriptural and theological subjects taught and discussed in them.* In this, we presume, lies the solution of the problem how it is that Welsh Sunday Schools have been able to secure the attendance of adults of all ages. Mr. H. Richard, in his "Letters on Wales," † has not only noticed the fact but also given the true explanation of the causes which produce it. "It is a matter of constant lamentation," he observes, "among the promoters of Sunday Schools in England, that the elder scholars when they have acquired a tolerable proficiency in reading, leave the school and are withdrawn from the salutary influence which might be otherwise exercised over them by their teachers at the

* In the year ending June, 1882, a slight deterioration is shown by the statistics of the whole body as regards percentage of adults. Total number of scholars and teachers = 6894; adults, 4179; percentage adults, 60·6. By 1883 there is an increase of 619 adults.

† p. 30.

most critical period of their life. But in Wales, however perfectly the young people may learn to read, they do not dream of quitting the school. On the contrary, when that acquisition is made, they frequent it with far more interest than before, for they form themselves into classes, under the guidance of older and more experienced men, for *studying* the Bible, bringing into the common stock whatever means of illustration they can command, to throw light over the history, geography, antiquities, and doctrines of the book. By this means, the people almost universally, not only learn to read with an understanding mind, but acquire also very considerable stores of sound Scriptural and theological knowledge, which among other things prepare and qualify them to be intelligent and appreciative hearers of their ministers' public teaching."

In fact, Welsh Sunday Schools, so far as the adults are concerned, have partaken more of the character of seminaries for religious instruction than of elementary schools established merely for the sake of teaching the mechanical art of reading. The topics for discussion embrace the widest range possible. No inquiry is discouraged which is believed to be within the legitimate bounds of Scriptural illustrations. The teacher, most often, is more like the chairman of a debating society than a lecturer at college—his province being more to guide and rule than to drill and enlighten. Thus the classes, as a rule, are places of great attraction to the members, and much preparation is made in the course of the week and on leisure hours on Sundays by studying commentaries and special works on doctrinal divinity, in order to take part in the discussions to advantage. They are, to all purposes, mutual instruction classes, possessing all the advantages which have been well described as belonging to these:—"The stimulus of united thought—the pleasing emulation in mental effort—the division of labour, resulting in the multiplication of knowledge—and the augmented interesting sacred themes set in different lights by different speakers." The following vivid and picturesque description of a Welsh Sunday School is well worthy of reproduction:—

"We want at this point to give to those of our readers who are unacquainted with Wales some idea of the Welsh Sabbath School, for it is a very different affair from anything called by that name

which they can find in England. It is not an institution of teachers and children merely, but a meeting where the great bulk of the congregation connected with the particular place of worship to which it belongs assemble to instruct one another in Divine things. It is very frequently the case that the first evidence of a change in a so far thoughtless man, is his beginning to attend the Sunday School. The majority of attendants are above fifteen years of age, and they range between that and eighty or ninety. Of course the children of the congregation attend, but they are outnumbered in most cases by the seniors. We could take our reader to many a school in Wales where he would find more pairs of spectacles than in any ten in the metropolis together. There is a female class in the corner of the room, the teacher of which is a matron of seventy-two. Perhaps she has been there every Sabbath, with very few exceptions, for the last forty years. Her dear old teacher went to heaven twenty years ago, and she has occupied her place ever since. The class is numerous, and her oldest pupil is perhaps eighty-five years of age, and her youngest approaching sixty. Of course she is under no necessity to teach them to read; that they have been able to do for many years,—indeed long before we were born; but they read a portion of the Word of God together, and then talk. A thought has occurred to one of them in reading, another to another, and each in her turn expresses her thought. Possibly the conversation drifts more in the direction of experience than in that of exegesis, but it is by no means uncommon for the whole host of spectacles to be considerably dimmed, and for the dear old sisters to go home more refreshed than they have been under many a sermon. There is a class of men of similar ages in the other corner, who possibly will go deeper into doctrine than their sisters opposite. Then there are classes of middle-aged, and of young people of both sexes, discussing, it may be, “The fall of man,” “The universality of the flood,” “The journeys of Israel,” “The travels of St. Paul,” “Justification by faith,” “The difference between regeneration and adoption,” or any other imaginable biblical or theological subject. It is this which accounts for the fact that such a large number of the common people in Wales are so much at home in the Holy Scriptures, and so well versed in theological knowledge. We do not mean to assert that all the Welsh people are thus, or

even the greater part of them, but we do believe we are right in saying that it is so in the case of a larger proportion of the working classes than in any other part of the kingdom. Some time ago we passed three working men, we believe they were colliers, sitting together on a heap of stones by the roadside, and earnestly discussing the question, "How to reconcile the sovereignty of God with the responsibility of man." It struck us at the time that people of that class do not usually discuss such subjects anywhere out of Wales. Perhaps we were mistaken; but we are certain that they would not have done it, and would not have been able to do it, in Wales, if it had not been for its peculiar system of conducting the Sabbath School.*

A circumstance which contributed very largely towards determining the character of the Sunday Schools as religious seminaries, but which has been entirely overlooked in all former disquisitions on the subject, was the peculiar religious controversies which agitated the country soon after they were established. The Calvinistic and Wesleyan Methodist denominations being at the time in process of development, were in the full vigour of youth; the Congregationalist and Baptist, though having made considerable progress in the country before, received an impulse which hitherto did not belong to them. There is hardly a village throughout the whole Principality in which each of these denominations is not represented, and the members coming so often into contact one with another in their daily avocations, it is natural to think that the peculiar tenets of each would be warmly discussed and tested by all the others. As each professed to lay its foundation upon the Holy Scriptures, "the law and the testimony" would be continually appealed to, as the criterion of truth. Hence the Sabbath Schools were frequented with increasing interest as affording the best means of becoming well grounded in religious truths and doctrinal distinctions.

The most important controversies of this period have been divided into two great classes; (1) the controversy of the Calvinists with the Arminians; (2) the controversies of the Calvinists among themselves. The former is reckoned to have continued from the year 1707 to 1831; the latter from 1811 to 1841. From this chronology it is found that the former had begun long before the advent of Sunday Schools into the country, but the interest excited

* "Welsh Calvinistic Methodism," pp. 170, 171, 172.

by the controversy then was merely local and transitory, compared with the amount of attention it secured after the rise of Sunday Schools. A few churches belonging to the early Presbyterians in the neighbourhood of Llandysul in Cardiganshire, and to the Baptists at Newcastle Emlyn in the same county, and at Hengoed in Glamorganshire, were greatly disturbed for a while by the different views entertained upon these questions; but the great body of these two denominations remained mere distant, and not very interested, spectators of the agitation. With the rise of Wesleyan Methodism, however, in the country, the subjects in debate were taken up with much greater vigour, and the whole of Wales was in one seething ferment, for this period of thirty years. It must not be thought that the controversy was carried on between the members of the body known as Calvinistic Methodists alone, and the Wesleyans; sound Calvinists both of the Baptist and Congregational bodies, were quite as prominent in asserting their convictions in opposition to their brethren of the rival system. The Sabbath Schools could scarcely avoid becoming interested in the issue, for it is a noteworthy fact that the rise of Wesleyan Methodism and the development of the Sabbath-School system were almost contemporaneous. The first place in which a Wesleyan cause was established in Wales was Ruthin, in Denbighshire, in January, 1800. This furnishes us with a sufficient reason why a more wide-spread interest was shown in the controversy than when it broke out in the eighteenth century.

Most of the points in which the two systems differ were keenly debated, but the two contending forces struggled longer and more fiercely about what were considered as the three most important positions, viz. *Predestination*, *Man's original state by nature*, and *The design and extent of the atonement*. With the Arminian, the decree of redemption preceded the decree of election, which is conditioned upon the foreseen faith of the individual. With the Calvinist, on the other hand, the decree of election preceded the decree of redemption, and the decree of election conditioned upon the simple good pleasure of God alone. Consistent with this, the Arminian asserted the ground of election to be the faith and repentance of the elect themselves, as foreseen by God; while the Calvinist looked upon the eternal, sovereign, and infinitely wise, righteous and loving will of God, as the ground of predestination.

The Arminian maintained that the doctrine of particular election emanating from the will of God, implies unconditional reprobation ; while the Calvinist maintained that the rejection is the natural consequence of the sinfulness and the guilt of the individual.

With regard to original sin, the Calvinists held that inasmuch as Adam was the federal representative, as well as the natural head and root, of all his descendants, the guilt, *i.e.* the legal responsibility of his public sin, which closed his probation and theirs, is righteously imputed to them ; and its penal consequences, the wrath of God ; divorcement from his spirit ; spiritual, natural, and eternal death ; are inflicted upon them in the line, and in part through the agency, of natural generation. On the other hand, the Arminian denied that the corruption of nature which mankind inherit from Adam by ordinary generation, and as natural heirs, is properly of the nature of sin, and deserving of the wrath of God, since it is involuntary. They maintained rather that all men inherit from Adam a natural infirmity, characterized as a destitution of original righteousness, making it certain that every individual uniformly sins, as soon as he commences voluntary agency.

Seeing that the key note of the two systems took its pitch, as it were, from the view taken of the nature and extent of the atonement, the battle raged longer about this point than any other. The Arminian view differed from the Calvinistic in two points. They maintain that Christ died, (1) For the relief of all men, (2) To make salvation possible. The Calvinists hold on the other hand that Christ died, (1) For his elect, (2) To make their salvation certain. In harmony with these views each maintained totally distinct lines with regard to the application of redemption. The Arminians admit the doctrine of man's total depravity, and that in consequence thereof man is utterly unable to do anything aright, in the unaided exercise of his natural faculties. Nevertheless, as Christ died equally for every man, sufficient grace enabling its subject to do all that is required of him, is granted to all, which sufficient grace becomes efficient only when it is co-operated with and improved by the sinner. Calvinists on the other hand, believe that the internal call is an exercise of divine power upon the soul, immediate, spiritual, and supernatural, communicating a new spiritual life, and thus making a new mode of spiritual activity possible ; that repentance, faith, trust, hope, love, etc.,

are purely and simply the sinner's own acts ; but as such, are possible to him only in virtue of the change wrought in the moral condition of his faculties by the recreative power of God. If Christ died only for his own people, the Arminians argued that a general offer of the Gospel could not be sincere and honest. To this the Calvinists answered that a *bona fide* offer of the Gospel is to be made to all men, because the satisfaction rendered to the law by Christ is sufficient for all men ; it is also exactly adapted to the redemption of all, and further that God designs that whosoever exercises faith in Christ shall be saved by Him. The design of Christ's death being to secure the salvation of His own people, incidentally to the accomplishment of that end, it comprehends the offer of that salvation freely and honestly to all men on the condition of their faith. No man is lost for the want of an atonement, or because there is another barrier in the way of his salvation than his own most free and wicked will. They retort also on the Arminian that if Christ died equally for all men, and that it is certain that many will reject the Gospel and perish for ever, then the sufferings of Christ were in vain on their behalf, and the object of the atonement frustrated.

Minor points in the great controversy were also incidentally handled, especially the different views held on justification, and the perseverance of the saints. With regard to the former, Arminians taught as to the nature of Christ's satisfaction, that although it was a real propitiation rendered to justice for sins, it was not in the rigour of justice, perfect, but was graciously accepted and acted on as such by God. They further considered that it was not strictly the substitution of Christ in place of his elect, but rather that he suffered the wrath of God on behalf of all men, in order to make it consistent with justice for God to offer salvation to all men on condition of faith. The faith which is imputed to the believer for righteousness, they consider to include evangelical obedience, *i.e.* the whole principle of religion in the heart. They consider it also as the graciously admitted ground, rather than the mere instrument of justification ; faith being counted for righteousness because Christ died. The Calvinists maintained that the active and passive obedience of Christ, satisfying both the precept and penalty of the law as a covenant of life, and thus constituting a perfect righteousness is, upon being appropriated by the believer in the act

of faith, actually made his, in a legal sense, by imputation. Faith, therefore, is the mere instrument whereby we partake in the righteousness of Christ, which is the true ground of our justification. With regard to the perseverance of the saints, the Calvinists believed that those whom God hath accepted in the Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved. The Arminians, on the other hand, maintained that those who were once justified and regenerated may by neglecting grace and grieving the Holy Spirit fall into such sins as are inconsistent with true justifying faith, and continuing and dying in the same, may consequently finally fall into perdition.

After this controversy between Calvinists and Arminians had been carried on for about ten years, it transpired from the course pursued by the former in maintaining their ground that they did not quite agree among themselves as to the nature and extent of the atonement. This gave rise to quite as animated a discussion of the various points at issue, as had characterized its former phase, especially after the year 1831, when the smouldering embers of the former controversy became quite extinct, and then for ten years more, the undivided attention of the country was devoted to the various forms of the Calvinistic system alone. Rev. Christmas Evans among the Baptists held that the sufficiency of the atonement depended on its appointment, and so denied, in a peculiar sense, its universal sufficiency. He upheld what was called the pecuniary as opposed to the penal nature of Christ's sufferings. By this he understood that the Saviour suffered an exact equivalent for the sins of the elect only. Rev. John Roberts of Llanbrynmair, among the Congregationalists, differed somewhat from him in declaring that the atonement had a general appointment with regard to some designs connected with the divine government, such as the creation of mankind, the imparting of temporal blessings to the world; but that it had also a special or particular connection with the elect. Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh, with the Calvinistic Methodists combined the general sufficiency and the particular appointment, granting at the same time that there is a difficulty in reconciling the two views, but accepting the apparently contradictory facts on the decided testi-

mony of Scriptures. Many others beside the three now mentioned, took more or less prominent parts in the debate, in fact it was continued some years after each of them had laid aside his sword and his bow in death. The questions belonging to each of the main controversies were ventilated from the pulpit, through the press, and in the Sabbath Schools. A host of pamphlets and several volumes of considerable size were issued to maintain or combat the different views, while all the periodicals of the period owed their chief attraction to the amount of space devoted to this class of literature. "*Seren Gomer*," "*Goleuad Cymru*," "*Y Dysgedydd*," and "*Y Drysorfa*,"—all monthly periodicals under the auspices of different denominations,—were eagerly expected and carefully scanned by almost all the reading population, with a view to enlightenment in various aspects of the controversy. As long as it was confined to a discussion of principles only, results of a beneficial tendency alone would have been produced. This, however, was far from being the case, for it too often deteriorated into bitter personalities, coarse expressions, and reckless misrepresentations of each other's views. It is to be hoped, through all, that one good at least was secured—the people were familiarizing themselves more and more with the Word of God, through the help of the Sunday Schools; like the Bereans of old, the great proportion were continually searching the Scriptures "to see if these things were so." Other points of difference between the various denominations were discussed with fluctuating interest throughout this period. Between the Baptists and all the others, the debate waxed warm and waned again, with reference to the mode and subjects of Baptism; between the Congregationalists and Methodists with regard to its proper subjects only; between all denominations alike, as regards the most Scriptural form of Church government, whether Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or Congregationalism. The classes of the Sunday Schools were suitable gymnasia for members to exercise themselves in the various Scriptural references to the peculiar tenets of each denomination.

Rev. Owen Thomas, D.D., of Liverpool, who in his "*Biography of John Jones Talysarn*," has written a very exhaustive and laborious *resumé* of the two great controversies already referred to, with regard to the former of them, has made the following pertinent and instructive remarks:—"After laying aside contention and

beginning to associate a little more one with the other as Christian brethren, each party came to feel one towards another better than they had been accustomed to think of the systems; and they gradually began to discover that there was enough Gospel truth—as, for example, the provisions of grace for a perishing sinner—in the aspect in which the one system and the other were practically presented to the world, to permit them heartily and unfeignedly to rejoice in each other's prosperity. The Calvinists came to look upon their Arminian brethren, in their zeal for the truth concerning the indispensable necessity for the work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating and reclaiming a sinner, and their earnest prayers for his intervention, as *practically* to grant an everlasting election and sovereign grace; and the Arminians, on the other hand, to look upon their Calvinistic brethren when exhorting all to accept the Saviour, at the same time assuring their hearers if they should reject him the blame of their perdition would be on their own head, as *practically* to acknowledge universal redemption. The Arminian, says the Calvinist, is totally inconsistent with the essence of his system; the Calvinist, says the Arminian, is quite contrary to himself, but “the world” say both “gets the advantage of the inconsistency.” Now, and indeed for some years past, while the conviction continues and increases, that there is an essential difference between the two systems, and the one section, like the other, is ready to maintain that the advantage of that difference appertains to it, the most thoughtful on each side are more ready than ever to acknowledge that there are peculiar and enormous difficulties belonging to each—such difficulties that the adoring mind can only exclaim when contemplating them, “O the depths,” and therefore feels that it is unfair as well as unwise to bring those difficulties forward as an argument against either, apart from the direct evidence of divine revelation.”*

With regard to the second great controversy he also remarks:—“Somehow after this (that is after each party, about the year 1841, had become exhausted) it came to be felt that as much had been said on each side as could be said, or at least needed to be said, and still the parties were drawn no nearer together. The consequence was, that some began to doubt if there were any hope of

* “Cofiant y Parch. John Jones,” p. 361. (Memoir of the Rev. John Jones.)

reconciliation on the arena of controversy. At the same time the conviction was increasing that the difference between them after all did not affect the essence and life of the Gospel, but that the great things appertaining to the salvation of a sinner were heartily and firmly received by each, and that the difference only existed in the *mode* of presenting them ; it was also felt a great pity that such a small, and in comparison trifling difference, should keep brethren apart, and cause contentions and quarrels between them. The notion was now gaining ground in the minds of the foremost and best men in the Principality that the essential thing needed now was not so much, disputing about the *forms* of the truth according to the various systems of divinity, as presenting the truth itself in its simplicity, its liberty, its fulness, its extent, yea even in its apparent Scriptural inconsistency before the world. It came to be considered that the Holy Scriptures not only contained the truths that were to be presented in the ministry of the Gospel before men, but also that the peculiar *form* in which those truths are therein expressed, was a model of the best *way* or *mode* of making that presentation. The result was that the ministry among the various parties assumed a more Biblical and less systematical style—plain, decided, and unambiguous on the doctrine of grace, but at the same time clear, strong, and unfaltering on man's duty and responsibility, so that by our time the controversies of our fathers are almost incomprehensible to us. There are now, we presume, but few who can sympathize with them in the importance placed by them on, and the strong jealousy manifested for, the particular *forms* in which alone they judged it was proper to express the truth ; and our greatest danger in these days is, forgetting the near and necessary connection which in our apprehension of it exists between the truth itself and the *form* it has in our mind, to become, in our disregard of the form, negligent of the essence of the truth itself. We are not sure that it would be no small blessing for Wales to get again a period of earnest controversy, conducted in a Christian spirit, respecting some of the great and vital truths of the Gospel.”*

In the same work we find one or two incidental confirmations of the remarks made respecting the delight which the people took at this period in theological and even metaphysical inquiries, and also the absorbing interest taken by the country generally in the various

* “Cofiant y Parch. John Jones,” pp. 536, 537.

phases of the Arminian and Calvinistic controversy. The subject of this memoir, Mr. John Jones, himself was eminently a child of the Sabbath School. There is no record of his having enjoyed a single day's school education throughout his whole lifetime, and yet he turned out to be one of the most thoughtful, powerful, and refined preachers Wales ever produced. He worked as a common quarryman for many years during the first period of his itinerant ministry. When working in a quarry near Llanrwst, in the year 1821, it is related that although many of his fellow-workmen were ungodly men, and often engaged in frivolous and vicious conversations, still when John Jones was present, these would be voluntarily dropped, out of respect to him, and religious topics introduced instead, which very often assumed a controversial form. One day the minuteness and care of God in his providence occupied their attention as a subject of debate. John Jones strongly pleaded that the smallest occurrences were under the complete control of the Supreme Ruler, and that all the Divine dispensations had been foreordained and would certainly terminate for the good of those who loved God, at the same time admitting that we could not always in the present life explain many things which seemed to militate against that outcome, and that it required the fuller knowledge of the future state to show how perfect Wisdom and Goodness always presided over all. This discussion proceeded that morning until the dinner hour. But when John Jones went to seek his portion, it was found that some dog which had accidentally strayed to the quarry had made off with the parcel of bread and meat brought by him from his lodgings that morning. Upon this his fellow-workmen came to him and asked him in a somewhat jocular mood, whether he thought Providence had a hand in that matter, and if he thought that could be for some good. He, however, resolutely asserted, and with what appeared to them under the circumstances a strange gravity, that this incident had not taken place outside the range of the Divine government, and that he was certain, though he knew not how, it was also intended for good. That day, nevertheless, he was compelled to get his dinner at his lodgings, which were some distance from the quarry. By the time he came there, he found that a friend had called to see him, and therefore he remained from his work longer than he had intended. When he returned he found his fellow-workmen dumb with astonishment and looking remark-

ably serious. The truth was, while absent with his dinner a large part of the rock had fallen down to the place where he used to work; and if he had not been under the necessity that day of going to his lodgings for his dinner, but eating it as usual in the quarry, he would have been killed on the spot. By this it became evident to his fellow-workmen, and more certain to him than it was before, that the smallest occurrences, and those which appear to us even frivolous, are under Divine control, and all intended for our good. The Lord had a great work for him to do, and therefore the eye of Providence watched over him, and as one very properly remarked, he was "immortal" until that should have been accomplished.*

Our next reference incidentally shows the great interest which the controversies above described excited not only in Sabbath School classes, but also among workmen while engaged with their daily avocations; it will also show the zeal which burned in the subject of this biography for the honour of the Lord of Hosts. "He continued," says Dr. Thomas, "to utilize every opportunity to bring the welfare of their souls to the consideration of his fellow workmen, speaking to each individually, and urging him to embrace religion with all his heart and without delay. He could not bear any to indulge in coarse language in his presence, and he generally carried so much influence with him that no one dared to transgress. One of his fellow workmen, who was at the time irreligious, reports that one Sunday he went to Llanrwst to a school meeting which was held by the Wesleyans. This man at the time hardly knew anything of the tenets of Arminianism and Calvinism. When John Jones returned to his work on Monday, from his Sabbath publication, he inquired, as his custom was, where he had been on Sunday. The man replied that it was to the Wesleyan Sunday School meeting at Llanrwst, and began to praise the Wesleyans and to reiterate that they were right, that their principles were more in accordance with the Bible, and that they were the best people. 'John Jones at first,' said the man, 'took but little, if any, notice of me. Hearing me, however, continuing to keep a noise, and in such a pretentious way, when he knew well that I had very little knowledge of those matters, he took me up, questioned me, and soon got me plainly to contradict myself. When I felt this I became somewhat ruffled, and uttered an ugly oath. John Jones instantly stopped

* "Cofiant y Parch. John Jones," pp. 81, 82.

the conversation and spoke not a word with me that day. On the morrow we went as usual to the rock together to get stones for splitting. While loading the barrow I cut my finger. There again I uttered an ugly oath. He at once let down the block which was in his hand, came to me, took my stone from me, and placed it on the ground. Then he laid hold of me with both his hands and carried me like a rag, some distance apart, to the middle of the terrace. The strength which I felt dealing with me made me quite heartless to offer any resistance. He kept me as quiet as if I were in a vice, for, as far as I can guess, about an hour's time. Looking me right in the face he spoke to me about the wickedness of cursing and every other crime of which I was guilty, so affectionately that I wept like a child. After getting a solemn promise from me that for the future I would thoroughly reform my conduct, he let me go free. We went back to work, and ever after, as you can well imagine, I was in constant dread, and kept strict watch over my temper and words, lest I should do anything wrong in his presence or in his hearing.' " *

In 1846, about five years after the termination of the theological controversies in their more virulent form, a quarterly periodical was started which carried great influence in guiding and fostering the studies of the more intelligent portion of the people. We refer to the *Traethodydd* (the Essayist). From its commencement it partook more of a philosophical than theological character. Able articles expounding the systems of Kant, Sir W. Hamilton, Mill, Sir. J. Mackintosh, and others, were appearing in it without intermission, and this opened out for the adult classes of the Sabbath Schools, fields of inquiries and contemplation quite as interesting, but far less personal than the controversies of former years. It has been the favourite study of the more advanced members ever since, how to reconcile Scriptural truths with the fundamental principles of the mental and moral sciences. The periodical which excited in them this bias, has since been supported by others of the same class, and foremost among them, by the greatest of all Welsh literary productions—the *Gwyddoniadur* (Encyclopædia); but the *Traethodydd* still continues a guiding spirit, and retains much of the vigour, though necessarily not the novelty, of its earlier years.

* "*Cofiant y Parch. John Jones*," pp. 82, 83.

CHAPTER XI.

PECULIARITIES OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES.

(b) Internal Organization.

Modern improvements in school instruction—Simultaneous teaching—The public catechising of Welsh Sunday Schools identical with this—First introduced by Griffith Jones of Llanddowror—Adopted by Charles—Arrangements for carrying out this method—In individual schools—In school associations—Mr. Charles's letter on these—Beneficial effects—Division of country into districts for Sunday School Unions—A description of an ordinary district meeting—Enumeration of results—Special attention paid to statistics—An abstract of those of one district from 1819 to 1880—A faithful district secretary—Encouragement given to treasuring the Bible in the memory—Remarkable instances—The Kelts and strength of memory—Efficiency of school inspection—Reports of same schools for 1827 and 1877—The district meetings, and *viva voce* examinations—A strong impulse to seek Scriptural knowledge—Instances—Services of teachers always gratuitous—Favourable contrast with schools of England—Special aim to secure eternal salvation of members—Revivals sprung from Sunday Schools—Vindication of Welsh revivals—Special advantages of teachers for influencing their scholars for good—Concluding remarks.

It is a noteworthy, and no doubt a creditable, though somewhat unaccountable fact, that some of the most important improvements of modern times, in the art of teaching, were practised in Welsh Sunday Schools from their very commencement. In some subjects, it is true, such as teaching the alphabet, spelling, and reading, the very worst methods of *individual* teaching have too long continued, each scholar coming up singly to the teacher to repeat his or her lesson, much to the detriment of order and discipline, as well as to the waste of the teacher's time, tact, and patience. But when we ascend above the mere mechanical art to the ultimate object of Sunday School instruction, viz. the imparting of Scriptural know-

ledge, and its attendant blessings, the best methods are found to have been universally adopted. One of these has been the due proportion of *collective teaching*, by means of classes; and the other, *simultaneous teaching*, by the grouping of several classes together into one whole. The latter is the leading feature of the Glasgow, or training system, so lucidly explained by Mr. Stow. In this system the school, or a considerable section of the school, is dealt with simultaneously. Questions are not directed to the individual, but to the whole group, and the answers are expected to come from all together, in a lively, musical strain, "like the noise of many waters." Certainly, this had been the most prominent feature of the schools of the Principality, long before it became known under its more recent nomenclature of the Glasgow system. It is not our intention at present, however, to look upon this feature as a special *method* of instruction, so much as upon the various organizations arranged to call it to action, and to give effect to its peculiar adaptation to the needs of the times. Therefore we designate as most prominent among Welsh Sunday-School organizations—

1. *The facilities provided in individual schools, and also in large districts, for catechetical or simultaneous instruction.*

There can scarcely be a doubt that Mr. Griffith Jones of Llandowror, originated, in this country, the plan of carrying on instruction in sacred truths by means of general oral catechising. Later organizers only applied the principle to more various subjects, and perhaps more interesting combinations. In trying to account for the early appearance of this method in the country, and the vast popularity it attained, it should not be forgotten that the first and best catechisers were ministers of the gospel. Witness the labours of Mr. Jones and Mr. Charles. Accustomed to deal with the masses simultaneously when addressing them from the pulpit, it was but a small step to change to the catechetical style, and then, no doubt, the exercise partook a good deal of the double character of questioning and addressing. Children and adults were both, but separately, instructed by this method. The latter were brought together to be catechised, in order to relieve the monotony of too long collective or class teaching; the former to impress them with religious truths long before they were able to read themselves, and in order to break the tedium of too much individual teaching. In later years public

catechising takes far better with the children than with adults in the Sunday Schools. The reason generally assigned for this is, that the method is better adapted to the institutions in their cruder state than when more perfectly developed. The fact that simultaneous instruction is more generally used in the infant department of the modern day-school, than with the more advanced classes, seems to favour this view. There is another reason, however, for the deterioration of catechising with the adults, viz. that the character of the questioning has entirely changed. In former years, the method both with adults and children, was used exclusively for instruction; but with the former now, it is used, perhaps, more for examination—a purpose for which the system, it must be granted, is very ill adapted. The success of simultaneous teaching depends on the possibility of a great number giving an answer in the same words and form of expression; but since, in the more advanced investigations, opinions and views vary as the individuals—*tot homines tot mentes*—and, consequently, the expressions; it follows, as a matter of course, that the best method for adults is the ordinary Sunday-School class, which furnishes a safe and effective medium between the individual and simultaneous systems.

In the earlier Sunday Schools, however, the latter was the mode, *par excellence*, and was attended by very beneficial results. The preparatory exercises presented much variety. Sometimes a chapter of one of the catechisms already published, was selected as a field of labour, and the whole school used to repeat together the answers learnt out, in a slow, emphatic, and impressive style. On other occasions, what was called *Pwngc Ysgol* (a school theme), was prepared, a specimen of which, from the pen of Mr. Charles, has been already given.* Slips of paper containing a question and an answer from the *Pwngc* was given to each class, to be got up by each member during the week, and while, in the public questioning, only one class repeated the answer given to its charge, the whole school took part together in trying to answer the extempore questions with which the catechist interspersed those already prepared. This oral catechising occupied a considerable part of every meeting of the school, generally the latter half. At stated times a whole service was devoted from beginning to end to questioning the school in the presence of the whole congregation, if any existed, not in-

* See p. 189.

cluded in the school, as was pretty often not the case. At more lengthened intervals the schools of a considerable district were collected together into one place, when a whole day was devoted, most often in the open air, to hear each repeating the allotted lesson. By this coming together to one place, a spirit of healthy emulation would be produced between the schools, which conduced greatly to the liveliness of the scene. It was considered a high distinction for any school to have come off the examination without failing, for the catechist now and then interjected some severe tests of their knowledge of Scriptural references, or kindred points arising out of the subject under consideration, between the questions already prepared; nor was the service devoted to the cultivation of the intellectual side of the scholar's nature only, the heart and conscience also had their due share. The impressions produced through these meetings in treating, for instance, such subjects as truthfulness, the evil of profane swearing, obedience, the due observance of the Sabbath day, and a host of other subjects, remained perceptible for months after, in the marked improvement of the moral conduct with reference to the duty inculcated.

Mr. Charles, in a letter written by him in 1808, has given us full particulars of this peculiar phase of Sunday-School work:—"We have also this year," he writes, "held associations of the different schools. They meet in some central place to be publicly catechised together. Three meetings of this nature have been held in North Wales, and three in South Wales. A subject is given to every school on which they are to be examined, and which they are to elucidate by repeating appropriate passages from the Sacred Writings. At the appointed time, generally a Sabbath day, the children of the different schools assemble, accompanied by their teachers. Some of the schools have walked ten miles by eight o'clock in the morning. The children being scattered in their different habitations over the country, for they dwell not together in hamlets as in England, they all meet at an assigned place, and at the appointed hour pray and sing a verse of a hymn together, and then march cheerfully and orderly for the place of their destination.

"As no place of worship is spacious enough to contain the immense concourse of people which attend on these occasions, we have been obliged to erect stages out of doors in the fields; a large

one for the children, of two or three schools at a time; another for the catechists, opposite to that of the children, at fifteen or eighteen yards distant; the space between is for the assembled congregation to hear. We begin the work early in the morning, and the whole day is spent in these examinations. Every examination lasts three or four hours, and is generally concluded by an address to the children of the congregation. In the short intervals between the examinations, the children of each school are conducted by their teachers into a room engaged for the purpose to partake of a little refreshment, and at the appointed time they are reconducted to the place of meeting. We have had on these occasions from fifteen to twenty schools assembled together. Hitherto these associations have been most profitable. The previous preparation gives employment for two months to all the youths of both sexes, in which they engage with great eagerness and delight. The public examinations, we have every reason to conclude, are also very profitable to the hearers assembled. This is clear from their great attention, and the feelings produced by hearing the responses of the children. I have seen great meltings and tears among them. When the work of the day is over the children are reconducted by their teachers to their respective homes, or committed to the care of their parents.

“In my intercourse with the children I have met with many instances of uncommon quickness of intellect and strength of memory. I have met with more than one who at the age of three years would learn any common tune in a very short time; and others at the same age who would very soon commit to memory long chapters without any apparent difficulty. There is a little girl only five and a half years old who could repeat distinctly above one hundred chapters, and goes on learning a chapter every week, besides the catechism, and searching the Scriptures for passages on different points in divinity. We have many blind people who treasure up the Word of God in their memory. One blind lad commits a whole chapter to memory by having it read over to him about four times. I have also met with many melancholy instances of very great ignorance among grown-up people, which has induced me to press them earnestly to attend the Sunday School.”

From this account we are led to conclude that there were two kinds of associations very popular at that time with the Welsh,

and which in fact continue so until this day—one was the association for preaching and the other the school association. The former has existed with unabated popularity, and with hardly any modification, from the revival of Methodism unto this day, and are common not only to that denomination but to the Baptists and Congregationalists alike. In some of the most numerous-attended meetings, from twenty to thirty thousand people are present to hear double lectures of three services, in the open air, during the day—each service lasting over two hours. The school associations have undergone greater modifications in accordance with the advance of education, but are now seldom held in the open air, since no more schools are brought together than can be comfortably accommodated in the most spacious chapels of the district. With regard to the beneficial effects of these associations in the past, Judge Johnes bears the following testimony:—"The cause of the Methodists was much advanced by their habits of meeting in large bodies for religious purposes. Nothing can be more imposing than such an assemblage in a mountainous region, as is well known to those who may have seen a 'sacramental occasion' in the highlands of Scotland; to the feelings of the Welsh, it was peculiarly suited, and the effect of such meetings may be judged of from the following anecdotes. Charles having heard that a kind of rural festivity called by the country people 'Wakes,' was about to take place in his neighbourhood, had a party of children drawn up before the inn, near the scene where the merry making was to be held, where he catechised them on Scripture precepts that seemed directed against such rejoicing; and strange to say the revel was actually broken up! At another time he had a similar examination before the principal inn of a town in North Wales, long known as 'an immoral and persecuting place.' The result was shortly afterwards the establishment of a school there, containing one hundred children! The success of these bold experiments can only be ascribed to the peculiar character of the Welsh people. . . . On several occasions, Charles assembled together in the open air, and in a central district, all the children who had been taught in the schools of North Wales, and they amounted to several thousands."*

The effect of all this life and labour, drilling and manœuvring, has been to place the Welsh in their knowledge of Scripture

* "Essays on the Causes of Dissent," pp. 45, 46.

and theology, probably foremost among all the nations of the world. From a very early age the people are thus prepared and qualified to understand and appreciate the public ministrations of their pastors. Hence it is, also, that sermon-hearing is a source of so much gratification to the mass of Welshmen. Their ministers are enabled to enter more deeply and at greater length into doctrinal points; the attention of the hearers can be secured for the whole length of an hour's discourse without flagging, when the most abstruse subjects are handled with the dexterity and unction which are often at the command of some of the "masters of the congregation." It was well for the ministers that intellectual adaptations have been more elastic than the material, else their labours in instructing and edifying the people would have been doubly difficult. In almost all the first chapels of the various denominations the pulpits were invariably placed high, often in too close a proximity to the ceiling for the steadiness of the preacher's head, and a happy sympathy with his hearers. For the sake of acoustic convenience, in later years, the distance and isolation have had to be corrected. The remedy was effected in one of two ways, either by raising the floor of the chapel or by lowering the pulpit—the latter method being resorted to much oftener than the former. Intellectually, however, the relative position of preacher and congregation has continued in better harmony always, for the Sunday School, like a mighty hydraulic power, has been the means of adjusting as it were the platform of the hearers to a suitable and appreciative distance from the standpoint of the preacher, however elevated it might be. In this respect at least the *levelling up* process has been in much greater vogue than the *levelling down*. Long may Wales continue to retain its proud pre-eminence for Scriptural knowledge, and long may its ministers foster Sunday-School labours, which elevates the people to them, rather than they should pamper to any vitiated taste of the people. Another peculiar organization of the Welsh Sunday Schools, and which has materially conduced to the extension of the system has been—

2. *The division of the country into small districts for the purpose of Sunday School Unions.* This has mostly been the case with the Calvinistic Methodist and Congregationalist denominations. The number of schools belonging to the union varies from ten to twenty, the limits being generally determined by geographical facilities.

To the union belong a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and often, but not always, a ministerial examiner or catechiser. A meeting is held at one of the schools of the union every six weeks or two months, at which the officers are expected to attend, and one delegate at least from each of the schools constituting the union. The whole Sunday is devoted to advance the interests of the schools of the union generally, and those of the school at which the meeting is held, in particular. One portion of the morning sitting is devoted to the delegates and teachers alone, at which the accounts from each school are read, detailing according to a prescribed form, the number of scholars belonging to each school, the meetings held, and the amount of work done, in committing to memory portions of Scripture and the various catechisms, during the past six weeks. New schemes for the advancement of the schools, or any proposals affecting the good of the district, are here broached and discussed, while considerable time is devoted to inquire of the teachers and officers of the place, their experience in the work; after which follow counsels and exhortations to further devotedness and fidelity. To the second part of the morning's meeting, the congregation generally is admitted, when a department of the school, oftenest the children, are catechised in a subject already prepared. In the afternoon again, another department, say the youths of both sexes, are similarly questioned, and this is followed by short addresses from the delegates on some point of morality, such as Sabbath profanation, drunkenness, profane swearing, truthfulness, etc., etc., which it is thought from the signs of the time demand special attention. Public exhortations to earnestness in all the work of the institutions find a place in one or other of these meetings. In the evening the whole school is generally catechised in a chapter from one of the catechisms of the denominations or from the Bible, which sometimes takes up the whole service; but the most usual course is to wind up the work of the day with a sermon from the examiner on a subject bearing on some of the aspects of Sunday-School labour. Most beneficial results have been secured through these organizations, to some of which we shall here briefly advert.

(1) *By the system of statistics kept up the work of the district has been unified, and stability imparted to the various details of school routine.*

In many of the districts, the figures which represent the progress

of the schools from the earliest period of the formation of the district to the present time, have been faithfully preserved by the secretaries. As a proof of the care and minuteness exercised, it may be interesting to peruse the following table, which shows the progress of a certain school district in the county of Merioneth, belonging to the Calvinistic Methodists, from the year 1819 to 1880, at intervals of five or ten years. The district is called that of Festiniog, but comprises the whole or part of five other contiguous parishes to it, all connected with the extensive slate quarries which form the staple industry of a wide area. The items inserted in this table are considered the most important, though others were supplied at the time, such as the average attendance each Sunday, the number of teachers' meetings held, and number of chapters of the various catechisms committed to memory.

FESTINIOG SUNDAY SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Year.	Schools in District.	Number of scholars.	Chapters and psalms repeated.	Separate verses repeated.
1819	8	827	10,844	31,098
1824	14	1189	10,588	39,346
1829	14	1566	10,964	49,509
1834	15	1432	9,944	49,714
1839	15	1630	12,193	62,064
1844	19	1977	17,105	96,002
1849	19	2317	16,318	90,030
1854	21	2452	17,039	101,760
1859	22	2785	16,982	149,878
1865	24	3284	20,147	188,315
1875	29	4564	In these years the chapters are reckoned by their number of verses.	722,695
1880	33	5434		

In 1877, this district was sub-divided into three portions of about eleven schools each, owing to its having become too unwieldy in its original form, and each of these is now a complete organization in itself. The faithful secretary who has preserved these records of progress from the year 1819 to 1865, was Mr. Morris Lloyd of Trawsfynydd, the father of Mr. Morgan Lloyd, Q.C., M.P. for the Anglesea boroughs, who attended the district meetings with hardly a failure up to the time of his death in April, 1867. In fact, he was only absent from three altogether, though he lived quite at one

end of the district, and only then from unavoidable causes. Once he was incapacitated through an accident which befel him, the second time, death in the family prevented his attendance, and the third time, a river which he had to cross had been rendered impassable by a great flood.

It must not be thought that the increase of scholars from 827 in 1819 to 5434 in 1880 is due altogether to evangelistic efforts, a great proportion no doubt must be attributed to the increase of population, for in the registration sub-district of Festiniog a population of 11,484 in 1871 had increased to 15,112 in 1881, namely, an increase of 3628 in ten years only, and in that of Llanfihangel y Traethau, a portion of which belongs to the Festiniog school district, a population of 4500 in 1871 rose to 5094 by 1881, an increase of 594 in ten years. It must be borne in mind also that the number of Sunday School members included in the above table represents only *one* denomination; if the numbers belonging to all the denominations were put together, then, as is shown by other statistics on this work,* the proportion to the whole population would be found as great as in any other portion of the Principality. The whole county of Merioneth is divided into about ten school districts, belonging to the Calvinistic Methodists, and every other county in North and South Wales is similarly divided according to the population.

(2) Another beneficial result of these organizations has been, *the encouragement given to the commendable practice of treasuring God's Word in the memory.* Mr. Charles gave the first impulse to this custom by asking some member or members of the Sunday School to repeat a chapter of the Bible at the commencement of the services when he was present, a practice which continued in vogue, indeed, throughout the country until very lately. This phase of the labour has now almost entirely disappeared, still the habit of learning portions of the Scriptures by heart, and repeating them in the class, is as prevalent as ever. In the district already referred to, as is seen from the table, the average reached in 1880 to more than 172 verses for each scholar, and in no previous year, we presume, was it exceeded, though the comparison cannot be very perfectly discovered, for in former years the chapters were reckoned separately, whereas recently the verses contained in chapters are added to the separate verses in order to make up the sum total. It has been

* See chap. xv.

thought that this strength of memory is a peculiarity of Welshmen. The following remarks will be read with interest by those who are disposed to favour this view. "The form of the Triad was no doubt adopted as an aid to the memory, by the artificial association of three unconnected events; and in connection with that remarkable power of memory not unfrequently evinced by Welshmen (a power manifested by the Celts of Britain, and alluded to by Cæsar in a passage already quoted, in which he mentions the Druidical practice of committing to memory a great number of verses), attention may be directed to a statement in one of the reports on education, that in a Welsh Sunday School in 1845, there were repeated by the scholars 105 chapters, containing 1716 verses, and 7988 single verses; and that one boy had learned and repeated thirty-five psalms."* We are rather disposed to think that this phenomenon is to be attributed more to a love of the Bible, and to the diligence with which this duty is inculcated on the members, together with the encouragement given in recording the amount of work done and reporting it to the district meeting, than to any innate superiority possessed by the race in the faculty of memory. Other nations are found able enough to learn by heart, whatever they have a liking to,—witness the long extracts so perfectly retained by actors in England and abroad, for dramatic representation. Nay, the Welsh have been taught to prize the Bible and to show their appreciation of it, by treasuring it in the heart. They know that it cannot be a "lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path," without being treasured in the memory. The young man cannot "cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to the word," if that word has not been impressed upon his mind. The teachers have learnt from the pages of the Word of Truth, that the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, has been promised to bring to remembrance, that is to consciousness, the word once lodged in the memory; and with the hope that this may be verified in the case of some of their scholars to bring about their conversion, when they themselves may have been laid low in their graves, they persevere in inculcating the duty of learning the word by heart, thus "casting their bread upon the waters," hoping "to find it again after many days." It is said of one of the early Methodist preachers, Rev. David Cadwalader of Bala, that he knew all the New Testament by heart, and a great

* Sir T. Phillips's "Wales," p. 21.

part of the old, but he undertook this labour because he had a real love for the Bible. When it was told him that the Papists were again likely to be in the ascendant, and that they would burn all the Bibles in the land, his reply was, "They will not burn my Bible, without burning me too."

(3) *The Sunday School Union has contributed much to the efficiency of individual schools by promoting a system of periodical inspection.* The need of inspection commended itself to some of the leading men of the movement from the very commencement. A number of the most competent members of the union are appointed every year to visit each school, in order to notice any defect or excellence, and to bring a report to the six-weekly meeting, which is read in the hearing of the delegates, each taking home with him the remarks which belong to his school. Many of these visitors or inspectors have shown much aptitude for the work. They have been able to discern the essential qualifications of a good school, and in the faithful discharge of the trust imposed upon them have been as full in exposing shortcomings as in praising superiority. There is a record of some of these inspections dating so far back as the year 1827. Of late, it has been a much more common practice to publish these reports. By selecting those of the same schools for the year 1877, we may institute a comparison between their condition, after an interval of fifty years, which will serve to elucidate the character of the inspection, the early development of the schools, and the permanency of the work done, for at least half a century. We shall distinguish the schools by numbers and not by names, as it is not our object to give prominence to any particular localities, but to illustrate facts which are common to scores of schools throughout the country.

1827.

1. There are but few children here unable to read, and few attending altogether compared with what might have been expected. The adults present were generally good readers. We found five classes of men, and one large enough to make three good ones. The members are rather unpunctual in coming together and somewhat lax in learning the Bible by heart. They recited

1877.

1. A good school. As regards organization and discipline, all that might be expected. We thought this was, to a great extent, to be attributed to the skill and activity of the superintendent. The classes read fluently and answer readily. It is a pity the school had not buildings more worthy of its dignity.

1827.

at the end of the school, the 16th chapter of the Instructor, and the 3rd chapter of Ephesians was repeated by one old woman who was over eighty years of age.

2. A cheerful but small school, no little children belonging to it, and many others besides children neglecting to attend. They repeated passages from Scriptures showing the riches of Christ.

3. A very numerous school. Very good readers, with the exception of a few. Some adults have neglected school. The first chapter of the Instructor was being studied and learnt by the school. Signs of great labour bestowed upon the young children in training them to commit verses to memory.

4. A large school made up of all ages. Several boys of considerable age unable to read, and consequently not knowing the Ten Commandments, or any kind of catechism. All conversant with the Lord's Prayer.

5. This school is mostly made up of old people and children. Evident signs of labour and diligence with the juvenile classes. They excel all we have come across in their behaviour in some things. They repeated several verses referring to the Sabbath day, and also the first chapter of the Instructor.

The visitors of 1827, one of whom afterwards became a preacher, and an author of a very good catechism on "The last hours of Jesus Christ," the Rev. Lewis Jones of Bala, add to their report some very suggestive general remarks on the character of the whole district. They have arranged them under several heads.

1. Very deficient in answering general questions when catechised

1877.

2. A small but satisfactory school, aiming at a higher standard through many difficulties. It would be a blessing for the school if its leaders took a somewhat more hopeful view of things. We should not be disheartened in doing a good work; for we know not "what will prosper whether this or that."

3. A flourishing school. The higher classes reading very well. It would be an advantage for the children to be taught spelling and reading from cards, and not from books in the old style. We inferred from the juvenile appearance of the school that the pastoral spirit was lacking here.

4. A strong school, and as regards organization and activity deserving high commendation. We ascribed this to the zeal and unmistakable ability of the teachers.

5. A good school, kept not in a chapel, but in four dwelling-houses. The reading on the whole was good, and the answering satisfactory. Cards are wanted here also for the children.

from the Instructor. There should be greater desire shown by the teachers and the classes able to read, to enlighten one another in the Word. 3. There should be better discretion shown in arranging the size of classes. We often saw classes large enough to be subdivided into three. 4. Children should not be allowed to proceed with their books without knowing thoroughly what they have gone over, and no class of good readers should be left to mutual instruction without being under the charge of a special teacher. 5. No one should be appointed a teacher without being duly enlightened in the importance of the office. 6. There were too many proofs of many remaining satisfied with being able to pronounce the words without making any effort to express the meaning of the whole passage. There should be more pains taken by the teachers to get their classes to understand what they read by patiently questioning them, and by making sure in the first place that they themselves understand what is read.

(4) *The district union meetings have no doubt secured longer life and greater efficiency to the practice of public catechising or examining.* Most schools are liable to flag and degenerate in this praiseworthy department of Sunday-School work. One special provision which has undoubtedly conduced to keep up the practice, has been the great day for the public demonstration of school work which came round to each at least every twelve or eighteen months, in connection with the district meeting. The subjects for examination are selected a long time beforehand, and a part of every school meeting is devoted to a special preparation for the great day. Although the delegates are not expected to take part in answering, still the fact that strangers from neighbouring schools are sure to be present as hearers, stimulates the whole school to greater thoroughness in the preparation. It is reckoned a matter of considerable disgrace for any school to fail to give a satisfactory answer to a question within the range prescribed to the examiner. In cases of great emergency some of the most proficient of the delegates will kindly step to the rescue of a struggling school.

The author well remembers when a youth in his native home the revered patriarch, Mr. Morris Lloyd, the indefatigable secretary already referred to, interposing with a helping hand when one of the largest schools of the district had been completely nonplussed. The subject of examination was "The offices of Christ," from the

Instructor, and the catechist was, Rev. Griffith Hughes of Edeyrn. When proceeding with the extempore questioning the inquiry incidentally turned to the personal poverty of the Saviour and the general character of his followers in this respect. A question was propounded whether he had any of the wealthy class among his attendants. The names of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were readily instanced. More were required, and a few more very slowly produced. But one at least was still wanting, and when knowledge or memory had entirely failed, and the whole school kept in a painful suspense for some moments with no one able to break the silence, Mr. Lloyd quietly solved the difficulty by responding, "Johanna, wife of Chusa, Herod's steward." The Rev. John Prytherch, in Anglesea, was considered in his day an excellent catechist. When he used to come to a locality, whether in connection with a district meeting or with his ordinary Sunday publication, it was always arranged for the school to be catechised as part or whole of one of the services. Weeks were devoted to prepare against his coming. Rev. John Hughes, D.D., of Liverpool, speaking in an Association on the Sunday School, testified to Mr. Prytherch's popularity as a catechist. He said that when he was a boy the children thought much more of Mr. Prytherch than of Rev. John Elias. It was considered a great distinction to be able to answer a question after all had failed. The subject on one occasion, he remembered, was "The History of Saul, King of Israel." After progressing favourably for some time in answering, a question came at which they all staggered—"Who were Saul's children?" He happened to have got up that portion well, and when profound silence had reigned for some time he called out with great confidence, "Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchishuah." In commenting upon this incident he remarked, "that although he had forgotten far more important answers given at the time, the names of Saul's sons had been indelibly impressed on his memory ever since, showing how much a certain amount of enthusiasm conduces to progress in every department of learning."

3. We must not omit another special characteristic of Welsh Sunday Schools, as distinguished from those of England, though not strictly included in the term "organization," viz. *that the labours of the teachers from the commencement were entirely gratuitous*. It was not so at first, we find, with Mr. Raikes's schools.

The particular mode in which he proceeded to establish his schools was as follows: After being fully persuaded that it was his duty to "try" and reform the notorious immorality of the children of a certain part of the parish of St. John's, Gloucester, and having fixed upon the house of one Mr. King, St. Catherine Street, to open a school, he placed about ninety children whose names he had previously procured to attend, under the care of four persons to whom he paid each one shilling a Sunday. Writing to Mrs. Harris, of Chelsea, November 5, 1787, the proportion of payment is more fully described. "The stipend to the teachers here is a shilling each Sunday, but we find them firing, and bestow gratuities as rewards of diligence, which may make it worth sixpence more." In the year 1785, Mr. William Fox, a deacon of the Baptist Church worshipping at Prescott Street, London, succeeded in forming a "Society for the Establishment and Support of Sunday Schools throughout the Kingdom of Great Britain." In the first report of the committee, published in January, 1786, it is stated that they had established five schools in the neighbourhood of London, and had received subscriptions to the amount of £987 0s. 6d. It was felt from the commencement in England that the expense of hiring teachers was a great impediment to the prosperity of the schools. In fourteen years, between 1780 and 1800, the Sunday School Society alone paid upwards of £4000 in stipends; gradually the system of hiring gave way to the employment of gratuitous teachers. The idea is said to have originated in a meeting of zealous Wesleyan office-bearers, one of whom, when the others were lamenting over the fact that they had no funds for hiring teachers said, "Let's do it ourselves."

In Wales this difficulty never presented itself. Mr. Charles never dreamt of allowing the instruction of his fellow-countrymen in the grand truths of Scripture to rest on such a weak foundation. No doubt he was assisted in this by the intense religious feeling prevalent in the country at the time. As has been already described, it is true the few circulating schoolmasters who were instrumental in establishing many of them, were paid a scanty pittance for their general service, but when the people were thoroughly convinced that the work of instructing each other in Scriptural truths was God's service, there was no lack of volunteers; of each it might be said, "what this one could do, he or she did it." The efficiency of

the work done is very greatly attributable to the fact that the mercenary feeling of labouring for hire has been entirely dispensed with. When the schools of England were conducted on the hiring principle it was said of the teachers "that many appeared rather to continue their services for the purpose of securing the trifling emoluments to which they were thereby entitled than from zeal to promote the object of the institution." A far higher principle actuated the Welsh teachers at all times—they were prompted to the work by a love of souls and a burning zeal to see the bounds of the Saviour's kingdom continually extended. The same feeling as impelled Raikes and Charles to commence the good work ruled in the breast of each teacher to continue it, and to whom therefore they were not unworthy followers. The credit due to the teachers of the Welsh schools and their scholars too, does not end here. Not only do the former receive no hire, they and their scholars have been eminent these many years for their liberality towards every good cause. In many schools there is scarcely a Sunday passing but that contributions are solicited from them towards the support of various philanthropic movements and Christian agencies. A new house for the Bible Society, a million Testaments for China, a monument to Mr. Charles of Bala, the liquidating of chapel debts, supporting preaching anniversaries, besides expenses incident to the promotion of the system itself, such as providing text books and prizes for the schools and the maintenance of the district union—these and other objects too many to be enumerated, have been and are, continually receiving to their appeals for aid, a ready and cheerful response. The character of the gift is not marred by its want of heart; on the contrary, it is full of this essential element of true generosity—

"The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven."

4. The last special phase of the Welsh Sunday Schools, which has been the aim of every organization and peculiarity, *is the great object steadily pursued from the commencement; being no other than the eternal salvation of all coming within the range of their instruction.* It was this high and holy end which was sought to be obtained that was brought forward by the early promoters, to justify the preliminary and preparatory forms of instruction, as consistent with the sacredness of the Sabbath-day. In earlier years the cate-

chising had its direction much more to awaken the conscience than to enlighten the understanding. This was peculiarly the style of Mr. Charles and Mr. Owen Jones. To this cause, no doubt, is to be attributed the numerous religious awakenings which either directly emanated from the schools in their origin, or were chiefly indebted to co-operation from them, for their extension. We have already inserted a letter by Mr. Charles dated May, 1805, in which he attributed the great revival of that period, immediately to the intensity of feeling produced at the Sunday School just commenced at Aberystwith by Mr. Owen Jones. An earlier revival, which took place at Bala and neighbourhood in 1791, was directly and chiefly connected with the schools. "Here at Bala," writes Mr. Charles, describing it, "we have been blessed with a great, mighty, and glorious out-pouring of the Spirit upon the congregation, and especially upon the children and young people. Scores of the wildest and most thoughtless young men and women have been converted. . . . I would not have died without seeing what I have lately seen—no, not for the world. The free schools are greatly blessed. The children, who were like pearls hid in the dust and mire, now shine with great brilliancy and beauty. Little children from six to twelve years of age are melted and overcome. Their little minds are full of spiritual things night and day. All this is an undeniable fact; I do not use exaggeration, but, on the contrary, have only selected a small part of that which is. The Lord has done great things for us, and to Him be the praise!" The same may be said of almost every other revival in Wales, and they have been very numerous from time to time, that the children of the Sunday Schools have been specially benefited, thus fulfilling the words of the prophet Joel, "And your sons and daughters shall prophecy, . . . your young men shall see visions, and also upon thy servants, and upon thy handmaids, in those days, will I pour out my Spirit."

It may not be amiss here to speak a word in favour of the revivals which have formed so remarkable a feature in the religious progress of the Principality. Of late, awakenings, described as revivals, have been brought into some disrepute, and this apparently not without some show of reason. Too often have they been liable to a well sustained charge of being entirely made-up things. Professional revivalists have been going about from place to place, abounding in expressions, and revelling in conduct, if not

absolutely blasphemous, at least grating to the feelings of all refined minds and reverent Christians. In the special services held with the view of producing a revival, every effort is put forth to excite the religious susceptibilities, and the promoters do not feel satisfied in breaking up the meeting without effecting at least an outward demonstration of some unusual influences. We do not forget that the Spirit works by means of human instrumentalities, and we are not ready to assert that he repudiates efforts directly aimed at producing results of a predetermined form, all we say, now is, that the revivals connected with the Sunday Schools of Wales were not of this type; and in this respect we presume that they agree better with the Scriptural description of the working of the Divine inflatus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth; and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." In the revivals originating with the Sunday Schools it was at the usual catechising exercise, in singing a hymn at the middle or end of the school, or at a prayer meeting not held with a view of producing a revival, but as a farewell service to a young man whose labours had been eminently blessed before, that the mighty overpowering influence came; and, in the last instance referred to, the feeling evidently was not the natural manifestation of sorrow at parting with a dear friend and benefactor, but a deep solicitude pervading all, for the welfare of the soul, and a strong desire that all should be found within the bonds of that covenant, over which neither death nor the grave has any dominion.

Sir T. Phillips, in his work on Wales, though not uttering his own views on the essential value of these revivals, has, nevertheless, quoted an extract from the pen of an eye-witness of one of them, which he does not undertake to criticise. The extract is inserted here, in order to elucidate the remarks made above respecting their spontaneous origin, and we also shall leave the reader to satisfy himself, after duly weighing the evidence, as it was asked with reference to the baptism of John, "whether it was of God or of men."

The following description of religious revivals, characteristic as they are of the people, and of the system of Methodism, should not be overlooked :—

"By a revival is understood an exterior awakening at a particular

time. Occasional conversions are not considered revivals, but such awakenings as are numerous, and extend nearly at the same time over a large portion of the country. It was deemed a revival when many were convinced and brought to the knowledge of the truth. It usually began in some one place, spread through the neighbourhood, and extended at times through several counties. Scores and even hundreds were at the same time pricked in their hearts, and were led and constrained to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" It is said that seven of these remarkable revivals took place in Rowlands' lifetime. This wonderful work began while Rowlands was ministering in the Established Church; and it is commonly said that it commenced in Llangeitho church while Rowlands was reading the Litany, and while he was reading these words, 'By thine agony and bloody sweat, good Lord, deliver us.' The words in Welsh are very expressive and affecting—'Trwy dy ddirfawr Ing, a'th chwys gwaedlyd, gwared ni, Arglwydd daionus.'

"The touching and melting manner in which Rowlands repeated these words affected the whole assembly so much that they almost all wept, and wept loudly. The extreme agony, as the Welsh expression is, of the Saviour, while suffering for their sins, was what touched their feelings and melted their hearts and filled their eyes with tears. They looked on Him whom they had pierced, and they mourned and wept. Many in the congregation were really convinced and converted, as their posterior conduct proved. This awakening was not confined to Llangeitho, but extended through the neighbourhood. The third visitation of this kind took place a short time after Rowlands had been ejected from his churches, and is probably what has been called the Great Revival on account of its extent, having spread through all the counties of South Wales. It began at Llangeitho chapel while Rowlands was preaching. His late son remembered the commencement of this, and, as he told the writer, the effect was very wonderful. The whole chapel seemed as if it was filled with some supernatural element, and the whole assembly was seized with extraordinary emotions; hundreds of them, with tears streaming down their faces, some evidently from excess of sorrow, others from the overflowing of joy, some broken and contrite with penitence, others rejoicing with the hope of glory. It may have

been that on this occasion a passage of Scripture had, as stated by his son, an uncommon impression on the people. The passage was, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.' Matt. xi. 25, 26. It was in these revivals that jumping or leaping for joy occurred, the excited feelings breaking forth at one and the same time, not only in jumping, but also in ejaculations, signifying glory or hallelujah." *

With regard to the jumping referred to in the above extract, it may be desirable to explain that this practice was altogether confined to the earlier revivals, and that no such manifestations have been attending those of later times.

But it is not in connection with revivals only that the Sabbath Schools have been the means of securing the eternal salvation of their members. Steadily and consistently throughout the years has this object been kept in view, and whenever it is feared that this essential mission is too much lost sight of, faithful messages are sent from the District Union Meeting, through the delegates, urging the teachers not to flag in endeavouring to bring home the truths of the Bible to the heart and conscience of the scholars. Many a pious teacher has never remained satisfied until he has had reason to believe that all under his care have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. Every individual member of the class is made the subject of special prayer, that God should graciously bless the teaching to the conversion of his soul, so that none, after so many years of happy intercourse here below, should be for ever separated in the world to come.

The result of so much earnest labour has been to add considerably to the number of Church members. Statistics of the Churches show that the great proportion of their present members have been added through the agency of Sunday School teachers. Nor is this so much to be wondered at. It is quite evident that the teacher has many advantages over the minister of the Gospel in particularizing his aim. The minister, from the pulpit, can only appeal in general and random remarks to the varied needs of his hearers; the teacher has the means of ascertaining the peculiar feelings, the difficulties and experiences of each member, and so bring all his

* Phillips's "Wales," pp. 144, 145.

arguments to bear directly on the point at issue. Many a teacher having reason to suspect that some of his scholars, like Israel of old on Mount Carmel, were halting between two opinions, has prevailed upon one and another to decide for Christ, and to say, "The Lord he is the God! The Lord he is the God"; and to many has he given a helping hand by standing as it were their sponsor at the Church meetings, when the new convert declared his wish "to give himself first to the Lord, and afterwards to his people." That this spirit may continue to animate all present and future teachers, is the urgent prayer of all true lovers of the institution.

CHAPTER XII.

LATER MODIFICATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS.

Criticisms on Welsh Sunday Schools—The Commissioners of 1846—Circumstances of their appointment—Subsequent estimates of their fitness for the work—Mr. Henry Richard's remarks in 1866—Mr. Lewis Morris's in 1882—Mr. Lingen's report on the Sunday Schools of a part of South Wales quoted—Also Mr. Symons's on the other part—And Mr. Johnson's on those of North Wales—Sir Charles Reed's subsequent report to the committee of English Sunday School Union—A review of Mr. Lingen's remarks—Brings worldly principles to explain the working of a Christian institution—An entire misconception of the character of the Welsh workman—*Not* lacking in deference to superior—Obliged to be self-educated—Not actuated by ambition—The Sunday Schools always aiming at the promotion of every moral virtue—Mr. Symons superior in discernment—His disapproval of metaphysical and theological inquiries discussed—The teaching of children to read not to be dispensed with—Whether greater isolation desirable—Improvement in organization since those days—Standards of attainment introduced—More thoughtfulness in style of questioning—Mr. Fitch on "Thoughtless questions" and "Catechisms"—Sunday School "Associations"—Specimens of preparatory questions—Written examinations—Concluding remarks on the modifications.

THE Sunday Schools of Wales have been subjected to all sorts of criticisms, some favourable and some adverse, on almost all the peculiar features which have been described in the two preceding chapters. The former class have not been entirely confined to natives of the Principality, who from a natural leaning towards an indigenous institution, might be looked upon as disqualified to form an impartial and disinterested judgment, but Englishmen also, after making them objects of special inspection and study, have declared their great, though not unqualified, admiration of most of the arrangements and general results. The latter class have no doubt emanated mostly from strangers; but with some, the correctness of

their decisions is open to grave suspicion, both on account of their well-known ignorance of peculiar circumstances, and from the hasty and cursory survey upon which they have based their conclusions. Introductory to our discussion of the modern improvements adopted into the schools, we shall call the reader's attention to some of these criticisms, of both kinds, and then proceed to point out how far, we think, those remarks were justified, what defects have been remedied in accordance with those remarks, and how far the reformed state agrees with the spread of knowledge and the progress made in educational methods and appliances generally.

The first witnesses whose evidence we shall quote, are the Commissioners of 1846. When we remember the great importance attached to their criticisms at the time, and the frequent references made to their reports even at these days, it may not be uninteresting to recall the circumstances under which they were appointed, and especially the nature of the instructions they received in their inquiry into the Sunday-School system of the Principality.

On the 10th day of March, 1846, a motion was made in the House of Commons for an address to the Queen, praying her Majesty "to direct an inquiry to be made into the state of education in the Principality of Wales, especially into the means afforded to the labouring classes of acquiring a knowledge of the English language." The Secretary of State for the Home Department having, on that occasion, undertaken that such an inquiry should be instituted, the duty of conducting it was confided to the Committee of Council on Education, who did not employ for that purpose their own inspectors, but on the 1st October, 1846, instructed three gentlemen, who are designated Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, "to ascertain as accurately as circumstances will permit, the existing number of schools of all descriptions in Wales for the education of the children of the labouring classes or of adults, the amount of attendance, the ages of the scholars, and the character of the instruction given in the schools, in order that her Majesty's government and parliament may be enabled, by having these facts before them, in connection with the wants and circumstances of the population of the Principality, to consider what measures ought to be taken for the improvement of the existing means of education in Wales."

In the instructions issued from the Committee of Council on

Education, on the 1st October, 1846, to these gentlemen, are contained the following passages directly bearing on the special sphere with which we are now concerned :—

“ Numerous Sunday Schools have been established in Wales, and their character and tendencies should not be overlooked in an attempt to estimate the provision for the instruction of the poor. The Sunday School must be regarded as the most remarkable, because the most general spontaneous effort of the zeal of the Christian congregations for education. Its origin, organization, and tendencies, are purely religious. The amount of secular instruction communicated is generally limited to the art of reading ; while, therefore, you avail yourself of any opportunity afforded you to enter such schools, you will bear in mind that they are schools of religion, and that the respect which is due from you, as an officer of the government, for the liberty which religious communities enjoy, should render you exceedingly careful that you in no degree infringe the civil privileges of religious congregations, either while in the school, or by the use you make of the information you may be permitted to acquire.”

It might have been expected from the high authority by which they received their appointment, and the special care, as shown in the above extract, with which the nature of their duties, and the limits of their inquiry were defined, that the commissioners themselves would have been men eminently qualified in every respect for the work entrusted to them. The general verdict now is, however, that they were eminently disqualified, both as regards their own personal experience and the influence to which they submitted themselves when collecting their information. Being anxious not to supply any occasion to repeat the injustice done to the people by the reproduction of their remarks, we shall premise our quotations with the generally-accepted estimate of the qualifications of the witnesses. This is no more than what is done by every tribunal. Eighteen years after the report had been issued Mr. Henry Richard reflected the general verdict of his countrymen respecting these officials in the following terms :—“ The commission consisted of three young barristers, who went about their work in utter ignorance of the language, the character, and all the social and religious peculiarities of the people. While groping about in the dark for some means of acquiring the information

they were in search of, they fell into the hands of one class, who hood-winked and misguided them in every possible way. The result of their labours was presented to the public in the form of three enormous blue books, containing a picture of the people, as respects their intelligence, morality and religion, which was unhesitatingly, and with singular unanimity, pronounced by all who had any real acquaintance with the country, to be a gross and hideous caricature. Unhappily, however, coming from men who in some sense represented the government, it was widely accepted in England as a true representation, and some traditionary echo from those huge official libels still lingers in many minds." *

After such a sweeping denunciation, it is easily felt that in no spirit of self-imposed importance does Mr. Lewis Morris, a member of the Commission of 1880, contrast the qualifications of his fellow-commissioners with those of the Commission of 1846. "Of that commission," writes he, "composed as it was of young English barristers, with no more knowledge of the wants of the country on which they had to report, than if it had been Timbuctoo, it is impossible to say that it was in any sense a success, or to deny that it had the effect of seriously misleading and retarding the growth of public opinion. Hasty dicta, reflecting gravely on the intellect and morals of a people of whose language and circumstances they knew nothing, are far too frequent in the pages of that report. They were thrown out in the same light-hearted way in which a lad fresh from the University sets himself cheerfully to review and underrate the life-work of some established writer or statesman, of whose defects or excellences he is in the happiest ignorance. But the haste and the flippancy of which the critics have no doubt long since been heartily ashamed, still rankle in the heart of the Welsh people, and after the lapse of thirty-six years, are still widely known among them as, 'Bräd y llyfrau gleision,'—The Treason of the Blue Books." †

Though it is generally admitted that their report on the Sunday Schools of the Principality, in accordance with the nature of their instructions from head-quarters, has been conceived in a better spirit than their remarks on the other departments of their inquiry,

* "Letters on the Social and Political Condition of Wales," p. 2.

† "Higher Education in Wales," *Contemporary Review*, April 1882, pp. 656, 657.

still the character of flippancy and lightheartedness with which they are charged is enough to justify a request for the reader to defer his verdict until he hears what can be said to qualify much of their criticisms. Mr. Lingen, who visited the counties of Caermarthen, Glamorgan and Pembroke, is particularly struck with the phenomenon of the lower orders endeavouring to educate themselves without any help or guidance from their social superiors. Rather than troubling himself to ascertain whether the system really effected what it aimed at, he proceeds at once to find fault that such rashness should ever have been contemplated. His estimate of the Welsh workman in his laudable efforts for self-elevation is anything but flattering:—

“Cut off from,” he says of him, “or limited to, a purely material agency in the practical world, his mental faculties, so far as they are not engrossed by the hardships of rustic, or the intemperance of manufacturing life, have hitherto been exerted almost exclusively upon theological ideas. In this direction, too, from causes which it is out of my province to particularize, he has moved under the same isolating destiny, and his worship, like his life, has grown different from that of the classes over him. Nor has he failed of tangible results in his chosen province of independent exertion. He has raised the buildings, and maintains the ministry of his worship over the whole face of his country, to an extent adequate to his accommodation. I am at liberty to consider only one part of this system—the Sunday Schools—which I shall at once do, with some minuteness, as exhibiting the most characteristic development of native intellect, and the efforts of the mass of a people, utterly unaided to educate themselves upon their own model. These schools have been almost the sole—they are still the main and most congenial—centres of education. Through their agency the younger portion of the adult labouring classes in Wales can generally read, or are in course of learning to read, the Scriptures in their mother tongue. A fifth of the entire population is returned as attending these schools, and half of this number is returned as able to read the Scriptures. The type of the Sunday School is no more than this:—A congregation meets in its chapel; it elects those whom it considers to be its most worthy members, intellectually and religiously, to act as teachers to the rest—and one or more to superintend the whole; Bible-classes, Testament-classes, and classes

which cannot read, are formed. They meet in the afternoon, and sometimes in the morning also, of each Sunday. The superintendent, or one of the teachers, begins the school by prayer; they then sing; then follows the class instruction—the Bible and Testament classes reading and discussing the Scriptures, the others learning to read; school is closed in the same way as it began. Sections of the same congregation, where distance or other causes render it difficult for them to assemble in the chapel, establish similar schools elsewhere. These are called branches. The constitution throughout is purely democratic, presenting an office and some sort of title to every man who is able and willing to take an active part in its administration, without much reference to his social position during the other six days of the week. My returns show 11,000 voluntary teachers with an allowance of about seven scholars to each. Whatever may be the accuracy of the numbers, I believe this relative proportion to be not far wrong. The position of teacher is coveted as a distinction, and is multiplied accordingly; it is not unfrequently the first prize to which the most proficient pupils in the parochial schools look; for them it is a step towards the office of preacher and minister. The universality of these schools, and the large proportion of the persons attending them who take part in their government, have very generally familiarized the people with some of the more ordinary terms and methods of organization such as committee and secretary. Thus, there is everything about such institutions which can recommend them to the popular taste—they gratify that gregarious sociability which animates the Welsh towards each other—they present the charms of office to those who on all other occasions are subject, and of distinction to those who have no other chance of distinguishing themselves. The topics current in them are those of the most general interest, and are treated in a mode partly didactic, partly polemical, partly rhetorical; finally every man, woman, and child, feels comfortably at home in them. It is all among neighbours and equals. Whatever ignorance is shown, whatever mistakes are made, whatever strange speculations are started, there are no superiors to smile and open their eyes; common habits of thought pervade all; they are intelligible or excusable to one another; hence, every one that has got anything to say is under no restraint from saying it. Whatever such Sunday Schools may be as places of instruction, they are real fields

of mental activity; the Welsh working man rouses himself for them; Sunday is to him more than a day of bodily rest and devotion—it is his best chance of showing himself, all the week through, in his own character; he marks his sense of it by a suit of clothes regarded with a feeling hardly less Sabbatical than the day itself. I do not remember to have seen an adult in rags in a single Sunday School throughout the poorest districts; they always seemed to be better dressed on Sundays than the same classes in England.”

After thus minutely and philosophically describing the schools, according to his theory, as a reflection of the characteristics of the people, and the people as being confirmed in those peculiarities by the essential arrangements of the schools, Mr. Lingen proceeds in the next place to explain, as understood by him, some of the special features which have been described in the preceding pages. His words are:—

“The original idea of the Welsh Sunday School (a mixture of worship, discussion, and elementary instruction, which the congregation performs for itself, and without other agency than its own) is found under every variety of development between a highly elaborated and the rudest form.

“In the rudest form of the institution little more is attempted than reading, or slowly learning to read, the Scriptures. Each class by itself, reads through the Bible from beginning to end. There is no questioning or discussion in the greater number of classes, or, if any, it is merely those verbatim interrogatories which I shall hereafter have to describe. Besides this, there is the learning to repeat verses, chapters, and *Pwncau*. With regard to the verses and chapters, we find such curious records as the following:—

“In the last year, 105 chapters of Holy Scriptures, containing 1716 verses, and 7988 single verses, were repeated in the school’ (then follows a table of seven schools, showing number of scholars, number of verses learned, or number of psalms and chapters).

“At the time that this account was taken, prizes were given to Levy Lewis, a boy employed on the wharfs, who had learned and repeated thirty-five psalms; and to David Hughes, a collier’s boy, who had learned and repeated twenty-six chapters of the Old Testament, during the preceding quarter.

“*Pwncau* is the plural of *Pwnc*, which means a point, sc., of doctrine, printed in question and answer, with Scripture proofs.

Each denomination, almost each chapel, has *Pwncan* of its own, which are, from time to time, published in the cheapest form possible. The different classes in a school have several parts of a *Pwnc* assigned to them. Each class learns its own part only. As soon as it is well committed to heart, the school makes a sort of triumphant procession to other chapels, very often to churches, to repeat publicly what they have thus learned. The mode of recitation is a species of chant, taken up in parts, and at the end joined in by all. It is generally expected that they should be able to sing a hymn or two at the same time.

“In such schools there is usually to be seen some very old person, who, at that age, has learned to read in them.

“A woman aged seventy-two, commenced learning the alphabet at seventy, and read a page from an elementary book to me, with great accuracy.

“In this school, there were among the scholars, three old women, one upwards of eighty, who, at that advanced age, had learned to read. She was now blind, but attended the school as a listener, and could repeat many psalms.

“Regular accounts of attendance are seldom kept. The school itself is sometimes dropped, during bad weather and short days. On its recommencement, it is said to be ‘revived.’ This generally is done by a prayer-meeting.

“Very different from the foregoing are those instances in which the vigour of the old institution has been clothed in more modern dress, such as Capel Mair, Capel Penygroes, the Narberth Sunday School Union, the Wesleyan and Independent schools at Milford, or the Wesleyan at Bridgend and Cardiff. The distinguishing mark of superiority in these latter schools is, that all the classes which can read the Scriptures are simultaneously employed upon the same passage; generally a very short one. By this plan, the minister, if he takes part in the school, is enabled to prepare all the teachers beforehand, or the teachers to meet and discuss the passage among themselves, and at the end of school all the classes can be catechised simultaneously.

“The causes which have been pointed out as enhancing the popularity, and so far, the utility of Sunday schools, apply to adults rather than to the young. In country districts, where the great majority of Sunday scholars are adults, the teaching of the junior

classes is most meagre and unmethodical. It is true, they learn to read in time, and, as they grow older, work themselves into the system of the school. Except, however, as preparing them for this, the education which they can get on such occasions is worth little. Though Sunday Schools are too often the only substitute for daily education, it is not pretended that they can supply its deficiency. On this point no evidence is more positive than that of Sunday School teachers and superintendents :—

“*Mr. John Davies.*—‘The education received at a Sunday School is nothing like sufficient for the wants of the poor.’

“*Mr. Rhys Jones.*—‘The Sunday Schools effect a great deal in the moral and religious instruction of the people; and very few children fail to attend some Sunday School or other. The instruction, however, which is possible for them to acquire here, is inadequate to their wants; being confined to purely religious topics and the art of reading. We experience much difficulty in making even thus much progress with a child that attends no day school at all.’

“*Mr. B. Thomas.*—‘The instruction received at a Sunday School is quite inadequate for the general education of the children of the poor.’

“The popular Sunday Schools are maintained at little or no expense. Almost every adult scholar possesses his own Bible. The elementary books used are little stitched pamphlets of the commonest kind. These are purchased by subscription. Commentaries are usually the property of individuals. They are possessed and read to a considerable extent. The rabbinical sort of learning, or exalted doctrine, often contained in them, suits the popular taste. I have heard the most minute accounts given of such customs as Expulsion from the Synagogue, and the Constitution of the Jewish Councils, and it will be seen by reference to the reports of my assistant, Mr. Morris, that a familiar acquaintance with formulæ embodying the more abstruse parts of the Divinity is far from being uncommon. Maps were seldom in use, but the Rev. David Rees, of Llanelly, told me that he believed the generality of Sunday scholars to be better versed in the geography of Palestine than of Wales. The addition of a lending library belongs only to the best organized schools.

“The influence which a separating language has had in giving this peculiar turn to popular education may be estimated from the

following table (extracted from the *Parochial Summary*), in which the two first hundreds are Welsh-spoken, lying in the upper part of Caermarthenshire; the two last, English-spoken, lying in the south of Pembrokeshire.

Hundreds.	Population.	No. of Day Schools.	No. of Sunday Schools.	No. of Day Scholars.	No. of Sunday Scholars		Total.
					Church.	Dissenting.	
Cathinog	11,067	12	37	502	356	2600	2956
Perfedd	7460	10	28	445	278	2600	2878
Castlemartin	4607	12	11	479	407	93	500
Narberth	13,151	31	27	1274	961	1252	2213

“Most singular is the character which has been developed by this theological bent of minds isolated from nearly all sources, direct or indirect, of secular information. Poetical and enthusiastic warmth of religious feeling, careful attendance upon religious services, zealous interest in religious knowledge, the comparative absence of crime, are found side by side with the most unreasoning prejudices or impulses, an utter want of method in thinking and acting, and (what is far worse) with a widespread disregard of temperance whenever there are the means of excess, of chastity, of veracity, and of fair dealing.”

Deferring, for the present, the observations we have to make on the above evidence and conclusions, we proceed to the report of another Commissioner of 1846, Mr. Symons, who visited the counties of Brecknock, Cardigan, Radnor and Monmouth. His remarks on the Sunday Schools of his district are the following:—

“The general tendency of Sunday Schools is decidedly beneficial. In many places, they have been the means of imparting most of the small amount of Scriptural knowledge which exists; and I believe that three-fourths of all the correct answers made to me in day-school examinations have been the result of Sunday School-teaching. I have met with a few excellent Church Sunday Schools, where the Scriptures are explained as well as read, and the Church catechism, instead of being presented to the child’s mind as a string of words for the barren exercise of the memory unassociated with ideas, becomes a living letter of doctrine and a fruitful code of moral precept. Such schools exist at Aberystwith, Llangenny, and St. Mary’s Brecknock, where instruction extends to the Liturgy of our

Church ; and there are some other instances of real instruction imparted in Church Sunday Schools, of all which full notes are given under the title of those parishes ; but in all these cases the effect is produced by the personal superintendence and continual exertions of the clergyman himself, or of some educated persons who personally instruct the children. When these are absent, all sink into the deep ruts of the rote system, and the mechanical exercise of reading. The child ceases to regard the instruction in any other light than as an appendage to the drudgery of the week-day routine, and all the sanctity of character and spiritual effect of the Sabbath School is utterly lost. These schools sadly preponderate in number. As regards the method pursued in Sunday Schools, little need be said ; it has no distinctive feature. This is, in my humble judgment, their chief defect ; the ordinary routine of hymn, reading verse by verse for a length of time, generally without illustration, comment, or question by the teacher, and the repetition of collect and catechism comprise the sum of the instruction attempted. There is nothing to awaken the faculties, arouse the interest, soften the feelings, and reach the hearts of the children. Simultaneous exhortation exists, I believe, scarcely anywhere in Church Sunday Schools. They want life. The whole system is spiritless and monotonous, and repulsive instead of attractive to children. The good Sunday Schools belonging to the Church, where the Church is alive and energetic, do vast good ; but even the best are capable of improvement in energy, animation and method.

“The Dissenting Sunday Schools are decidedly more effective for the purposes of religious instruction than those of the Church. They have defects of mental and spiritual exercise, but their system is far superior, where it is effectively administered. These schools are of a character wholly distinctive from that of Church Sunday schools ; they are intended less for the instruction of children in elementary religious education, than designed as a familiar means of spiritual improvement for the congregation at large ; hence the large number of adults who attend them. It is a pleasing sight to see a chapel thronged with the poorer classes, each pew containing from five to ten persons, consisting either of male or female adults, or children, and in each pew a teacher, selected for the superiority of his zeal and knowledge, reading with the rest, and endeavouring in most cases with his utmost ability to explain the Scriptures to his little

flock, who in all good schools are questioned to the best of his powers as to the meaning of all difficult passages. When it is considered that, with scarcely an exception, the thousands who throng these schools belong exclusively to the working classes, and that numbers in every chapel are surrendering the best part of their only day of rest to the office of teaching and improving their still humble neighbours; and when I remember that in many places these working people, in their Sunday Schools and chapels have alone kept religion alive, and have afforded the only effective means of making known the gospel,—I must bear my cordial testimony to the services which these humble congregations have rendered to the community. At the same time, the defects of the dissenting schools are obvious. In many there is far too little mental exercise, and in such cases the school degenerates into a mere seminary for learning to read and sing. This defect is always proportioned to the greater or less degree of ability in the teacher. The system is not in fault; it is owing in great measure to want of competent information in the teachers—and this is especially the case with female teachers—and a good deal to the comparative neglect of these schools by the dissenting ministers, whom I scarcely ever saw in them, and who, it may be supposed, would be most competent to direct and stimulate the teachers. This office is wholly left in most cases to the superintendent, who does not always perform his function effectively, especially in the personal visiting of each class, and in the exhortation which ought to be given invariably at the conclusion of the school. This excellent method of keeping alive attention, and giving oral instruction, is imperfectly practised in most of the dissenting Sunday Schools, and almost wholly unpractised, to the best of my knowledge, in Church Sunday Schools.

“In some of the dissenting Sunday Schools questioning leads to discussion, and discussion not infrequently to a profitless inquiry into abstruse points of polemics and diversities of creed which tend little to Christian improvement. I have heard very curious and recondite inquiries directed to solve even pre-Adamite mysteries in these schools. The Welsh are very prone to mystical and pseudo-metaphysical discussion, especially in Cardiganshire. The great doctrines and moral precepts of the Gospel are, I think, too little taught in Sunday Schools. They are more prone to dive into abstract and fruitless questions upon minute incidents, as well as

debatable doctrines,—as for example, who the angel was that appeared to Balaam,—than to illustrate and enforce moral duties or explain the parables. The essential means of salvation are usually better taught, but not always with sufficient simplicity.

“The routine is admirable. In all the best schools nothing is done to weary—everything to keep attention awake and to enliven the school; nothing is tediously prolonged. There is continual diversity of mental occupation, varied by hymns; and *vocal* music is exceedingly well taught and practised in some few of these schools. I would beg especially to refer your Lordship to the reports of the Aberystwith Sunday Schools for full details of the interesting character of the system pursued. One of its main merits is that of training teachers by previous preparation. It is impossible, on visiting dissenting Sunday Schools, not to feel a desire to see a little more of the same attention, sympathy and pains bestowed by the rich and educated classes on those below them, which the better portion of the working classes bestow on their poorer neighbours. It is much to be feared that there are more Samaritans among the poor than among the rich in these counties, and that the remark of Mr. Phillips, a gentleman of great benevolence and large property in Radnorshire, is very just—‘Until the landed proprietors and clergy take a much greater interest in the conduct of the farmers and of the labouring population, little permanent good can be expected.’

“I cannot close these remarks on Sunday Schools without venturing to express my disapproval of the practice, common alike to Church and dissenting schools, of allowing young children to learn to read in them. This is surely a perversion of the object and spirit of the institution. I have frequently seen persons occupied in teaching little children to spell and pronounce small words, not only engrossing their time with the drudgery of elementary instruction, but disturbing the rest of the scholars. Schools thus conducted cease to be seminaries of religious knowledge and sink into week day schools of the lowest class. It is a fallacy to say that no secular instruction is given in Welsh Sunday Schools; this *is* secular instruction, and of the most profitless and least spiritual kind.

“I have ventured to speak freely of the defects I have witnessed in Sunday Schools, because I am deeply impressed with the extensive

benefit they are capable of, and because I believe that a friendly development of what appear to be their shortcomings may not be without its use."

Mr. Johnson also, who visited North Wales, has devoted a very limited space to report on the Sunday Schools in some general terms. His words are:—

"The nature and object of the Welsh Sunday Schools are distinctly marked. In the week-day schools all profess to learn English, in the Sunday Schools (speaking generally) all learn Welsh. The object which the poor desire from the former is secular knowledge; the end to which they devote their whole attention in the Sunday School is religion, to the exclusion of every other study.

"The course of proceeding in these schools is much the same, to whatever denomination they belong. They are commenced as a religious service, by reading a chapter of the Bible, singing hymns, and by prayer. The classes are then distributed in pews, each pew containing from five to ten scholars, with their teacher. These are occupied for nearly an hour in reading the Bible in Welsh, repeating portions by heart, and answering questions addressed to them by the teacher. This is followed by a simultaneous catechising of the whole school from some doctrinal catechism peculiar to the religious denomination to which the school belongs, the questions being answered simultaneously by the older or younger portion of the members, according as they are respectively addressed by the superintendent, who explains and enforces the catechism in use by extempore interpolations. The proceedings conclude, as they began, by devotional exercises. The humble position and attainments of the individual engaged in the establishment and support of Welsh Sunday Schools enhance the value of this spontaneous effort for education; and however imperfect the results, it is impossible not to admire the vast number of schools which they have established, the frequency of the attendance, the number, energy, and devotion of the teachers, the regularity and decorum of the proceedings, and the striking and permanent effects which they have produced upon society."

We shall now add, what indeed will furnish us with an indirect comment on some of the views of the Commissioners, extracts from the report of Sir Charles Reed, a gentleman who took much interest in the cause of education generally, was chairman of the London

School Board up to the time of his death, some two or three years ago, and was particularly interested in religious education. In the year 1850, at the request of the Committee of the Sunday School Union, he visited the Principality to make a fair inquiry into the state of the religious education of the country. His field of inquiry was chiefly South Wales, but he says that he talked with friends connected with Sunday Schools in North Wales, at Festiniog, Harlech, Portmadoc, Tremadoc, etc. With reference to some of the schools in South Wales, Sir Charles offers the following remarks:—

“The schools consist not so much of children from the streets, as those belonging to the congregations; and in them also are found adults as well as children. Scores of old people, with feeble steps, were seen directing their way towards the Sunday Schools, and out of almost every house, father, mother and children hasten thither. In the school itself the sight is very interesting. I have seen schools in almost every county in England, and those very numerous, but never before have I seen schools like these. Far behind in plan, organization and method, and the numerous appliances possessed by English schools, there were also absent, the dull formality, and that heavy mechanism which so often impede our actions. The life and earnestness of religious teaching were evident. The subjects taught were made interesting and attractive; every eye appeared fixed, every mind chained; and overcoming the inconvenience arising from the want of suitable premises to carry on public instruction, the classes seemed eager to press on to meet the teacher's voice. These schools supply an insight into the most characteristic development of the national intellect, and of the people's efforts for self-tuition according to peculiar methods of their own. It is no wonder that it has been said of the people of Wales that the Sunday School has been her chief instrument of civilization and religious instruction.”

Summarizing his remarks after taking a general survey of the schools Sir Charles proceeds to say:—“The Sunday schools are large. Taking twenty in one part of the country, they were found to contain on an average, three hundred persons each. They are almost universal throughout the country, and, of course, are to be found of every type—some lacking much in points of order, and others again highly elaborate. Every chapel has its school, which is expected

to be commensurate with the congregation, for all who attend the place of worship are expected to take their places in the school. The work of teaching is not left to the young and inexperienced ; but the best belonging to the church are publicly elected, and when called to the work no distinction is made between rich and poor. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that ninety per cent. of these teachers are truly religious men and that the instruction given is eminently devotional . . . Objection has been taken to the high *doctrinal* character of the education conveyed. It may be so, but it is closely connected with plain evangelical instruction. The numerous accessions made to the churches from the schools, prove that an instrumentality quite different from what has been insinuated is at work there. Testimony to this effect is given to me everywhere. I attribute the general Scriptural knowledge of the people entirely to the spread of Sunday Schools. If the people, having a theological bent of mind, are sometimes liable to plunge to fruitless and minute investigations, they are careful not to lose sight of a constant inculcation of moral duties and a simple representation of gospel truth.

“One remarkable peculiarity of these schools, is the presence of *adults*. In 440 schools, while there are only 20,179 children under fifteen years of age, there are 22,915 members above that age, and a great proportion of these are made up of heads of families who always feel attached to the institutions in which they were brought up. Out of this number, 20,981 are females and 22,113, males ; showing in comparison to the population a great preponderance of the latter. And this is still more strikingly apparent in reference to the teachers. Out of 5893 teachers in 440 schools, no fewer than 4714 are males while only 1179 are females. This is said to be mainly attributable to the want of early attention to the education of the female sex in the rural districts. . . .

“Absent scholars are carefully looked after, and visited on Sundays when found to neglect the class. The general attendance is punctual and regular, on the part of the teachers as well as the scholars. Great attention is paid to vocal music. Good discipline is generally maintained ; the rules are obeyed by high and low alike, though in most cases they are very stringent. Above all, the devotional exercises both in the school and the prayer meetings bear witness of the most decided character that there belong to the

people, pure love, and zealous attachment to the work of the Sunday Schools, such as is not surpassed in any part of our highly privileged country. Well might Mr. Symons grant that 'in the midst of all, the schools had proved a marked feature in the mental and religious progress of the people, and inasmuch as they are necessarily the spontaneous effort of Christian zeal, they well deserve our respectful *consideration*.' If he had inquired into the nature of the institutions as thoroughly as some have done—looking less to walls and forms, registers and book-lore, and more at earnest purpose and spiritual qualifications—he would have paid the higher tribute to their worth, and added that these people 'are wise to win souls.'

"From the ardour of the people's religious feelings, their mental power of application and comprehension, their attachment to old landmarks, their constant clinging to evangelical truth, and their efforts to spread the Sunday-School system, one can easily understand how the tone of their morals is so high—which is evident from the comparative absence of crime—and how to account for the fact that the people of Wales are so inoffensive and simple; instead of branding them as enthusiasts, their schools as inefficient, and directly leading to immorality, the people riotous, cunning, and ignorant—skilful to evade the law, though always ready and wicked enough to transgress it. Notwithstanding the sad proofs of the prevalence of intemperance, yet the public testimony, and the aspect of fairs and wakes, and, above all, the state of the streets at night, show how greatly exaggerated is the statement which has been lately published.

"People speak of the Rebecca riots. Let them inquire into the history of this inoffensive and poor nation, and judge in the face of the tyranny and the extreme intolerance to which they have been exposed, whether the wonder is not that such scenes happen so seldom. But, strange to say, the Sunday School is held responsible for these disturbances, and the teachers of the people are charged with being guilty of inciting the popular mind to this conduct, of infusing into them the principles of rebellion rather than those of peace, and of keeping up the Welsh language with the sole object of being able thereby more secretly to scatter the seeds of evil!

"Notwithstanding all adverse criticisms, the fact remains uncon-

troverted, that the inhabitants of Wales are receiving excellent religious instruction, which with the advantages of secular education rapidly increasing among them, and this education free from state interference and control, and with their Sunday Schools still preserved from the imminent destruction which threatens them, but sustained in improved efficiency, will enable them to give the best answer possible to their calumniators—by proving themselves a free, prosperous, and godly people.”*

In reading the evidence of the three commissioners we feel at once that it is Mr. Lingen’s which shows the most unmistakable signs of self-sufficiency and infallibility, and at the same time betrays the greatest lack of the proper qualifications to enable him to produce a candid and unprejudiced report. He undertakes to pass judgment on a Christian institution, when apparently ignorant of the very first principles of Christianity. With only ordinary weights in his bag, quite unconscious of the incongruity, he proceeds to estimate qualities which can be duly appreciated only by the “weights of the sanctuary.” He has brought most unfounded charges against the character of the Welsh peasant, and has been so unfair as to visit the crimes and foibles of the irreligious on the community generally. By implication he makes the best members of the Sunday Schools to be ignorant, narrow-minded, disrespectful of their superiors, ambitious; and explicitly denounces them as regardless “of temperance whenever there are the means of excess, of chastity, of veracity, and of fair dealing.”

In the same proportion, as he conceives, that the Welsh workmen are desirous of rising in the social scale, does he sneer as well at their method of self-culture, as at the endeavour itself. From the oft-recurring contrast which he draws between them and “the classes over them,” “their superiors,” “social position during the other six days of the week,” and from the numerous references he makes to his belief of a studied intention on their part to shut out those classes from all rule over them, on Sunday at least, we cannot but be reminded of the haughty Roman patrician Coriolanus in his estimate of the common people, calling them, “time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.” Instead of, like a Christian

* *Sunday School Union Magazine* for 1850, pp. 271-5. Translated from a Welsh version, but on comparison with the English original—wrongly referred to in the Welsh extracts—found to agree not only in meaning, but nearly in expression.

philanthropist, rejoicing at every effort towards self-improvement, this commissioner must speak disparagingly if not sneeringly, of the Welshman's love of his Sunday suit, and the "Sabbatical," whatever this may mean, feeling with which he regards it. Can it be possible that he also, like the haughty Roman senator would rather they had always remained in a state of serfdom and obsequiousness?—

" *Woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats ; to show bare heads
In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder
When one but of his ordinance stood up
To speak of peace or war.*"

Mr. Lingen, when speaking of the Welsh peasant's "worship like his life having grown different from that of the classes over him," and of his "province of independent exertion," as being "chosen," seems to imply that they must have rejected the offers of their superiors to undertake their education. But herein he evidently betrays lamentable ignorance of the history of the country. The people were bound "to educate themselves upon their own model," or to remain in utter darkness as far as their social superiors showed any signs of moving in the matter. It was the want of that "attention, sympathy, and pains" on the part of the "rich and educated classes towards those below them," spoken of by Mr. Symons which compelled the working people of Wales to strike out for themselves or perish. One of the most important missions of Christianity is the elevation of the masses, and in the sacred books it is not prescribed that if "social superiors," neglect to accept the privilege, the people are to sink lower and lower into ignorance and degradation rather than adopt a course of mutual instruction, which is urged upon them by men risen from their own ranks. This commissioner, too, is quite mistaken when he asserts that no superiority is acknowledged within the precincts of a Sunday School. Truly, he says that an "office and some sort of title are presented to every man who is able to take an active part in its administration without much reference to his social position during the other six days of the week." But surely, he should not be surprised at this. The remark is another proof of his ignorance of the principles of Christianity, for in the divine code of morals which members of Sunday Schools are taught to recognize, and which is indeed their special study, it is particularly

enacted that the true basis of superiority is not that which arises from social position, but that which is founded upon unblemished character, unostentatious goodness, and eminent piety. "The constitution," we grant, "is purely democratic," but it is a democracy not of communistic socialism as much as of a Christian brotherhood founded upon the apostolic standard of distinction, "let each esteem others better than themselves," or if the words of an un-inspired poet be more intelligible, they have acted on the understanding that—

"The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gold for all that."

Next to the sweeping charges which grace Mr. Lingen's closing remarks with reference to the moral character of the Welsh people, there is no imputation which grates so harshly on the feelings of men devoted to Sunday-School work as that with reference to the motives which actuate the Welsh workman in undertaking the office of teacher. "The position of teacher," he says, "is coveted as a distinction, and is multiplied accordingly." The Sunday Schools "present the charms of office to those who on all other occasions are subject, and of distinction to those who have no other chance of distinguishing themselves." "Sunday is to him the best chance of showing himself, all the week through, in his own character," the character, we suppose, of "democrat" and "braggadocio." How are we to account for this utter want of courtesy and candour on the part of the commissioner? Is it what Bacon describes as the *idol of the forum* that has warped his better judgment to arrive at such an ignominious verdict? Because he had too much reason to know how dominant these principles are at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields and Downing Street; what scheming, cringing, and jostling for office and distinction too often characterize municipal and parliamentary advancements, he must needs apply the same principle to explain the impulses which sway the poor Welsh peasant in seeking an opportunity to exercise functions of gratuitous toil, drudgery, and self-denial, in connection with the Sunday School. The work of the Sunday-School teacher has always been a labour of love, an opportunity for one who feels he has received all from his Saviour to show his sense of gratitude, by giving himself "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable," in His service. A direct and uncompromising denial has been given to such an

explanation by the whole tenor and import of the preceding chapters. Instead of the office, forsooth, from the lack of that constraining love in many, being so much sought after, it has too often to go a-begging and to be urged for acceptance, with all the art of persuasion that the superintendent can command. Many of these would only be too glad to find as a matter of fact, though certainly not from the motive implied, that classes were to be multiplied because of the pressure for the office of teacher. Their actual experience, on the contrary, is that classes must be grouped together, thereby becoming too unwieldy to be efficiently handled, because of the want of competent and often any teachers whatever volunteering for the service. As to the office being coveted by the young aspirant after distinction in order to be a stepping-stone to the rank of preacher and minister, such aim being known would be considered a direct disqualification, though no doubt fidelity and assiduity in the discharge of the duties of this office have always, and no doubt very properly so, been considered as an important recommendation in favour of a candidate for the higher sphere. Because he has been faithful in the least he is placed over many. It is curious to think how prone men of a somewhat high social position are to attribute pride and vanity as motives in the humbler classes for the desire of an enlargement in their sphere of usefulness. Almost the only point in which we differ from Judge Johnes in his otherwise just discernment of the character of the dissenters, is when he attributes ambition as the ruling principle urging the first Methodist lay preachers to call for ordination. His words are, "It is well known that Charles and his clerical brethren were urged into this indefensible measure by the continual importunity of some of the lay preachers who were *ambitious* to participate in the privileges of that profession." Whatever may have led the Judge to this uncharitable remark, it is not difficult to trace the origin of the commissioner's error. This is readily solved in the light of the apostle's canon, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Perhaps the same idol mentioned by Bacon will explain the genesis of the grand discovery he made, that, "As soon as the *Pwnc* is well committed to heart, the school makes a sort of triumphal procession to other chapels, very often to churches, to

repeat publicly what they have learned." Did it ever occur to the commissioner that the procession might have been got up, not because of the exuberance of joy for having mastered the *pwnn*, nor from a passion for demonstration accompanying its recital, but simply because better order is secured in a Sunday School, as well as in every other concentration of the masses, by a march than by a scramble?

No idol of Bacon, however, it is to be feared, will account for the venomous sting in the tail of his report when he designates "the character developed by the theological bent of mind of the people as a widespread disregard of temperance whenever there are the means of excess, of chastity, of veracity, and of fair dealing." We readily grant that the vices enumerated have been and are too prevalent in the Principality, as elsewhere; but not more so than elsewhere, nor so much so as many other places; and we venture to assert that here they are found mostly among the four-fifths who do not belong to the Sunday Schools, and not the one-fifth who frequent them. At least, the direct aim of the education imparted in them has been to weed society of such noxious and loathsome weeds. We hope, as it has already been apologized on their behalf, that what was too hastily uttered has been leisurely and heartily repented for; and that it may be a warning against any amount of flippancy and light-heartedness being thought a sufficient justification for traducing a whole nation, and so becoming guilty of as great an immorality as any denounced in their victims. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

After writing the above remarks we were pleased to find our views confirmed in the following paragraph, written within two years of the appointment of the commission:—

"The Welsh Commission present a report, in which the Sunday Schools of the Principality are roughly handled. Would that the Government had a little more discretion in the selection of their inspectors! Mr. Lingen is a gentleman of high intellectual powers and legal acumen, but he is not the man to appreciate the devoted labours of gratuitous Sunday-School teachers; and those who know anything of the schools of Wales will grieve to see so unfair a picture. It is easier to kick the beam than to hold the balance with a steady and impartial hand. Of the efficiency of the Welsh schools report has ever borne testimony, and of their increase the

following numbers will tell. The children in Sunday Schools were in—

1818	1833	1846
24,408	173,171	238,740

giving in 1818, 1 to 28 of the population; in 1833, 1 to $4\frac{5}{8}$; and 1846, 1 to 4. And this in the midst of so much poverty and so few advantages.*

Mr. Symons has evidently come to the work better qualified in every sense to discharge its important duties. He has not been dogmatic in matters which he rightly perceived were within the domain of empirics; and, directly opposed to the practice of his colleague, he has attributed the very same conduct on the part of the Welsh peasant, to love of virtue, honour, and nobleness, where the other only saw unmistakable signs of pride, vanity, and meanness. Nothing can be a more effectual refutation of the vagaries of the first than the well-weighed words and just discernment of the other two. The office of teacher, in his estimation, is much more likely to fall into dishonour from the natural tendency of the best of mankind to become “weary in well-doing, because it takes up the greater part of the teacher’s only day of rest,” than to be too eagerly sought after, notwithstanding the aliment it may supply to a pitiable craving for notoriety and distinction in a depraved appetite.

We are at one with this gentleman in his censures and eulogiums, on all the points he touches, with the exception perhaps of one or two. It is difficult to understand why he and Mr. Lingen should object so much to the Welsh showing a familiarity with “the more abstruse parts of divinity,” and a proneness to “mystical and pseudo-metaphysical discussions.” In any other nation, such as the Greek or the Scotch, this is considered an honourable distinction, but to the Welsh it is circumscribed as forbidden ground. Even if it were true that the “abstract and fruitless questions” are taken up at the expense of neglecting the inculcation of moral duties and the explanation of parables, still the recommendation remains, of peasants and hard-worked labourers finding pleasure in such intellectual pursuits. The truth, however, has already been proved to be far otherwise, for from the days of Mr. Charles until now, both

* *The Sunday School Magazine* for 1848, p. 48.

by questioning and public exhortation, there is hardly a moral duty which is not explained and enforced, each in its turn, or according as circumstances show the need of calling attention to a particular duty. Sir Charles Reed confirms this testimony when he says that "they are careful not to lose sight of a constant inculcation of moral duties, and a simple representation of evangelical truths."

We maintain that the "curious" questions propounded in the schools are far less frequent than the "recondite;" and the "profitless" than the "debatable." With regard to the example of the profitless question asked, "who the angel was that appeared to Balaam?" if by that he meant his *name*, we think it as likely such question to have been asked as that the name of the ass that carried him should have been sought after. But there is nothing improbable, or quite fruitless, in such an inquiry as "whether it was the great angel of the covenant, the second person in the Trinity, in his pre-incarnate existence, or one of the created angels that appeared unto him?" So far as our experience goes the subjects discussed in the Sunday-School classes instead of being "curious," and "profitless," most often naturally and necessarily rise from the passages ordinarily read; and since these contain "the deep things of God," can it be wondered at that they are abstruse and metaphysical? The commissioner is surprised to learn that questions "to solve pre-Adamite mysteries," are taken up in these schools. Did it ever strike him that most of the mysteries in theology are pre-Adamite? Is not the existence of God himself, the very foundation of theology, a pre-Adamite mystery? Rather than the questions discussed in them being vain, futile and trivial, what we have heard discussed in them were such as these:—"What is the connection between the foreknowledge of God and predestination?" "How is the certainty of the divine knowledge to be reconciled with the contingency of human volition?" "What constitutes a *moral*, a *free*, a *voluntary* action?" "Which is the more correct view, to attribute liberty to an action and an agent, or to the will as a faculty?" "How is the freedom of the will consistent with regeneration?" "What is the connection between justification and regeneration?" "God being said to 'justify the ungodly' and also that 'he who believeth is justified,' can a man be a believer and ungodly at the same time?" In fact there is hardly a question within the domains of theology and metaphysics but that some of

the adult members will dare grapple with, if it arises naturally from the passage under consideration. When Milton was bethinking himself of a list of subjects most suitable for the discourse of the highest created intelligences it was on these very subjects that he decided. He says that they

“reason’d high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate;
Fix’d fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;
Of good and evil much they argued then;
Of happiness, and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame.”*

Surely, then, it should be thought no discredit for the poor Welsh peasants, in class assembled, when quite ignorant of the flights of Milton, and the disquisitions of Plato and Aristotle, but merely from a constitutional bias, to discuss these subjects, at the same time guiltless of all ambition to be considered clever, profound or distinguished.

Another point raised by Mr. Symons deserves a remark or two—the objection he makes to “permitting young children to learn to read in the schools.” It is not quite apparent whether the objection is to teaching young children to read at all in the schools, or to carrying on the teaching in the same room as the adult classes. If the former, then it is quite evident that Mr. Symons is mistaken as to the primary intention of the institution. Teaching children to read and adults too, ignorant of the art, was the very first object of the Welsh Sunday School. The fact that they have turned out also to be “colleges for religious instruction,” was but a collateral development of the chief end, the former being the foundation of the latter. As long as there will be children continually growing up to whom reading must be an art to be acquired, it does not seem clear how the drudgery of teaching them can be avoided. But if the objection be to their being assembled in the same room as the adults, to the inevitable disturbance of the more advanced classes, this defect has ere this in most schools been remedied, by the building of a separate schoolroom for the children, in connection with the places of worship. This remedy, however, has its drawbacks. Teachers of children have an objection to be isolated from the general concern, since they are thereby deprived of the privileges which are common to all the departments. To remedy this

* *Paradise Lost*, bk. ii. lines 561–565.

objection to a certain extent, it is the custom in many schools to march the children to the main room during the time of public catechising, whether this exercise is to be confined to them altogether or to be chiefly directed to the adult classes. Another more serious objection to this isolation of children is the loss incurred of being accustomed from their tenderest years to look upon the Sunday School as an institution worthy of the attendance of a whole life; and to have ever present before their eyes, all the grades, from the alphabet class to those engaged in deep discussions by patriarchal sires, and in exchanging edifying experience by mature matrons. Perhaps with improved methods of teaching, the maximum of work can be combined with the minimum of noise, and that the advantages resulting from carrying on together, a mixed republic of every age, can yet be secured.

All the witnesses above quoted have called attention to the want of system and method in almost all the schools. By this they mean that classes of similar attainments are distributed promiscuously throughout the school instead of occupying a common quarter; that classes are permitted to study different portions of the Scriptures instead of having a common theme for all; and that members are allowed to join any class they prefer without any supervision by the superintendent, thus causing every attempt at graduation according to attainments to be entirely lost sight of. Since the time to which their reports refer, considerable improvements have been effected in each of these divisions, though much still remains to be accomplished. Reverting to the last, as possibly the most important, we find that the system of graduation into standards adopted in our day-schools has been successfully introduced into some of our Sunday Schools. For the sake of guiding other schools which may yet be behindhand in this matter we shall here insert the full description of standards which have been proved to work well in Gorphwysfa chapel, Llanberis, Caernarvonshire, since the year 1878, with the principles of which we entirely agree.

Standard I.—To master the alphabet and first primer; to learn by heart the Lord's prayer, and "Mother's gift," chapters i.—vii.

Standard II.—To read words of two syllables, and answer questions on the verses read; to spell words of two syllables; to learn by heart "Mother's gift," chapter viii. to end.

Standard III.—To read fluently, with attention to punctuation ; to answer easy questions on the pronouns, and the persons speaking the different portions of a narrative ; to answer one-third of the questions on the first twelve years of the Life of Jesus Christ ; to learn by heart the Ten Commandments and the first part of “ Father’s gift ; ” to spell trisyllables.

Standard IV.—To read fluently and accurately, with due attention to articulation and punctuation ; to answer one-third of a number of questions asked on the history of the patriarchs from Noah to Abraham ; to know the second part of “ Father’s gift ; ” to answer two-thirds of the questions on the Baptism and Temptation of Christ ; to spell accurately any six words.

Standard V.—To read with proper emphasis ; to answer one-third of the questions on the history of the children of Israel from the birth of Moses to his death ; to draw a map of Palestine against the examination, or to answer one-third of the questions on the geography of the country and to point out the proper places of the particles *ac* and *ag*, *mai* and *mae*, *yw* and *i’w* in a sentence ; to learn the latter part of “ Father’s gift ; ” to answer five out of twenty questions in the history of Jesus Christ from the Upper Chamber to the Ascension.

Standard VI.—To read accurately six verses ; to give a personal opinion with regard to the views of some author on the portion appointed as the field of study for the district ; to form a number of questions on the verses read ; to point out the nouns, pronouns, verbs and adjectives in a passage ; to answer in writing six questions on “ The extent and minuteness of God’s Providence,” out of Hodge’s “ Outlines of Theology ” pp. 262–270.

With the view of promoting the scholars through the various standards regularly and carefully the following rules are added :—

1. To have two superintendents appointed over the juvenile department of the school.

2. That the superintendents should bestow special attention upon the classes by often visiting them.

3. That the attention of the teachers be specially called to the importance of their office, and their co-operation invited to carry out the scheme and to impart the necessary instruction efficiently.

4. That an examination be held twice a year on week evenings.

5. That three examiners be appointed, one to go out of office

every year, and to have the right to nominate his successor, to be confirmed by the teachers' meeting.

6. That every Candidate passing a standard shall have a certificate for that standard, to be signed in one of three grades, *fair*, *good*, or *excellent*, and to be publicly presented to the successful candidates.

7. That a public meeting be held every year in connection with the scheme to make a demonstration of the efficiency of the work and to exhort to future perseverance.

With regard to the attempts to unify the subject of study in the adult classes to which Mr. Lingen attaches so much importance, various schemes have been from time to time adopted in different schools. A certain theme is sometimes fixed by the district meeting for all the schools to study for the following six or twelve months; in other schools the portion for the following Sunday is announced at the end of every school meeting, and others again take up the portions selected by the English Sunday School Union. However, from the various capacities of the different classes, and especially from the different abilities of the teachers, though the classes start together, very soon the uniformity is completely broken up. After all, perhaps, it is quite as well to leave the selection of the portions for study much to the discretion of the teachers, subject to some general suggestions made by the superintendent or visitor.

Since the days of Mr. Charles, various modifications have been introduced into the method of public catechising. The great aim of all the changes has been to excite greater thoughtfulness on the part of the scholars. It has been charged against several of the schools that too little habit of thinking is a prominent defect in them. In feeble hands, no doubt the old style of catechising was liable to give too much encouragement to noisy declamation as compared with quiet thoughtfulness. Deep waters always run silently. With the old *pwnn*, the answers had to be learnt by heart, and success was too often measured by the strength and quantity of harmonious sound with which these answers were uttered by a whole class or school, than by the readiness and accuracy with which different members answered the extempore questions. This tendency was most often manifested with the children. With many an interrogator the sum and substance of

the answers expected from them was to vociferate, "yes" or "no" to questions which suggested the alternative to be taken up, on their very form; as "God is very good to us all, is he not my children?" "Yes." "He has created us, has he not?" "Yes." "He did not create us to dishonour him, did he?" "No." "Nor to forget him?" "No." etc., etc. The only variation to this sing-song proceeding was when the questioner led the children to say "yes," when they ought to have said "no," which in virtue of the inertia produced by the previous series they invariably shouted. As for example, the questioner continuing the series said, "God is not dishonoured when a child takes his name in vain, is he?" "No," would the children thoughtlessly cry out, until he advised them to pause a little, and think over the matter, when the very check produced would suggest unto them the "yes," and not because they had got any deeper insight into the subject.

The same view of the worthlessness of questions requiring only "yes" or "no" for an answer, we are happy to find, is taken by Mr. Fitch in his widely known lecture on "The Art of Questioning." Feeling how important this subject is to many Welsh teachers because of the abuses of the past, we are tempted to quote some of his remarks in full:—

"There is a class of questions," says he, "which hardly deserve the name, and which are, in fact, fictitious or apparent, but not true questions. I mean those which simply require the answer 'yes' or 'no.' Nineteen such questions out of twenty, carry their own answers in them; for it is almost impossible to propose one, without revealing, by the tone and inflection of the voice, the kind of answer you expect. For example,—'Is it right to honour our parents?' 'Did Abraham show much faith when he offered up his son?' 'Do you think the author of the Psalms was a good man?' 'Were the Pharisees real lovers of truth?' Questions like these elicit no thought whatever; there are but two possible answers to each of them, and of these I am sure to show, by my manner of putting the question, which one I expect. Such questions should therefore, as a general rule, be avoided, as they seldom serve any useful purpose, either in teaching or examining. . . . Hence, however such simple affirmative and negative replies may look like work, they may coexist with utter stagnation of mind on

the part of the scholars, and with complete ignorance of what we are attempting to teach." *

The same author in another lecture on "Memory," objects to the learning of catechisms or whole pages of any other ordinary book by heart. But on examining his reasons for objecting, we find that they do not bear upon the method adopted in the best style of catechising in the Welsh Sunday School. One reason he adduces against learning an answer from a catechism, is that "the phraseology in which the answer is couched is probably neither better nor worse, than the language which any person who understood the subject, would spontaneously use," and consequently he finds that the mind is subjected to the drudgery of a mere mechanical association of *words*, instead of an association of *thought*, which is really what is wanted. At the same time he agrees that it is desirable to cultivate their *verbal association* in learning by heart passages of Scripture, and verses of religious poetry; and such formulæ as the creed or the commandments. The reason for the exception in favour of the first two, is that "not only is the *substance* of the thing remembered valuable, but the exact *form* is also important. There being in these cases a certain fitness and propriety in certain words, we must make the children remember the words *as well as* the ideas which they signify." And with regard to the last two, "the sentences are complete in themselves, and are concise *formulæ* of faith and duty, which, if remembered, will serve a definite purpose." †

Herein consist the very reasons for tolerating the practice of learning the catechism used in the Welsh Sunday Schools. The answers are mostly theological formulæ, which require accuracy of expression, and they are couched in a phraseology which hardly any person could spontaneously command, much less the class of people who get them up by heart there. Besides, each answer is substantiated by a passage of Scripture, which also was to be learnt by heart, and which is one of the class of expressions not objected to by the author. And finally, the catechising was not confined altogether to the questions and answers of the catechisms,

* "The Art of Questioning," by J. G. Fitch, M. A., Sunday School Union, pp. 19, 20.

† Lecture on "Memory," by J. G. Fitch, M. A., Sunday School Union, pp. 30-36 *passim*.

but other extempore questions and answers took up as much time as the prepared formulæ, which exercise is much more of the type of a simultaneous object lesson in the modern day school, than a mere *rote* exercise of individual teaching. It has been found, however, that this method is liable to be abused in the manner indicated by Mr. Fitch; and to remedy the evil, various plans have been adopted. One is, to give a chapter of the Bible to prepare without any intimation of the scope to be taken up by the examiner. The whole school has to repeat each verse of the chapter in a strong united voice as directed by the catechist. But all further unison of answers depends on the mere accident of a number adopting the same form of expression to utter their thoughts, which very seldom happens. The direct effect of this method was to produce more research and thoughtfulness. Lately, a plan has been adopted to divide every school into three portions, children, youths, and adults, and then to supply each section with a few leading questions bearing on the subject allotted for the public catechising, and in these they have to labour for some months before the testing day arrives. For the children, some of the most interesting biographical themes of the Old Testament are usually selected, such as the history of Joseph, Moses or Samuel; for the youths of both sexes some portion of the life of the Saviour, the travels of Paul, or a section of Old Testament history; while for the adults, a doctrinal subject or some moral duty is almost invariably selected. As specimens of this class of questions we shall here insert a few out of a number prepared by Dr. Edwards of Bala, on "The Person of the Holy Spirit," for adults, and some others which the author was asked to prepare for the youths of some Sunday Schools in Liverpool, on "The Life of Christ," previous to holding a public oral questioning on the subject.

(1) "THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."

By the Rev. Dr. Edwards, Bala.

1. Prove that the Holy Ghost is a Divine person, and explain why he is called Holy Spirit.
2. Why is it said He "proceeds from," and not "is begotten by" the Father?
3. Prove that He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and not from the Father only. What is the tenet of the Greek Church on this point?

4. Inasmuch as Christ is a divine person, what need was there of giving Him the Spirit?

5. What is the relation between the work of the Son and the work of the Holy Spirit? Trace this subject into its various branches as taught in the New Testament.

6. What is the difference between natural light in the conscience, and the supernatural light imparted in regeneration; and what difference is there between the general and effectual work of the Holy Spirit?

7. It is said in Mr. Charles's Scriptural Dictionary that "the nature of the will, like the will itself, is free, else it would not be a will, and such a faculty would not belong to a man;" to what degree has man by nature, freedom of the will? What is the difference between this freedom and the freedom brought him in regeneration? etc.

(2) "THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST."

By the Rev. D. Evans, M.A., Dolgelley.

I. FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS BAPTISM.

1. What is the difference between the names "Jesus" and "Christ?" What other persons of the same name are mentioned in the New Testament?

2. What historical allusions are there in the Gospels that may aid in fixing the date of His birth? Why did Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem? Mention prophecies that refer to the time and place of Christ's birth, and the tribe from which He sprang.

3. What remarkable events, in connection with Christ's birth, preceded and followed it? Whence, and why, did Jesus go to Egypt, and whither did he return? State what is related of the Saviour's childhood and youth.

II. FROM HIS BAPTISM TO THE FIRST PASSOVER.

1. What was Christ's age at His baptism? What time is likely to have elapsed from that event until the First Passover? Describe the political condition of Canaan when Christ began His public ministry? Who baptized Christ? When and why was He baptized?

2. When, where, why, to what sins, and with what results, was Christ tempted?

3. What disciples are mentioned soon after the temptation?
4. Mention the other circumstances relating to the history of Jesus until His First Passover?

III. FROM THE FIRST PASSOVER TO THE SECOND.

1. Where did Jesus keep the first Passover during His public ministry, and whence had He come there? Recount some of His works in Judea on this occasion. What account have we of John the Baptist when Jesus was in Judæa? What two events bearing some relation to the close of his life occurred in connection with the first Passover?

2. To what place did Jesus go from Judæa? Which way did He go, and what incidents occurred during the journey? What part of Canaan was, and why was it, the principal scene of Christ's ministerial labours? Which was His first tour through this district, and who of His disciples accompanied Him? Specify in detail the chief works of Jesus during this period.

IV. FROM THE SECOND PASSOVER TO THE THIRD.

1. From what verse is it inferred that Jesus went to Jerusalem for the second Passover? What works did He perform during this visit? What gave rise to a discussion between Jesus and the Pharisees on this occasion?

2. Whither did Jesus go from Jerusalem? How did He now set apart His disciples? Why did He choose twelve? Name them. To what part of Canaan did they belong? Was there any connection between the Sermon on the Mount, and this setting apart?

3. What communication passed at this time between John the Baptist and Jesus in Galilee? Where was he, and during what stage in Christ's career did he die?

4. How many journeys through Galilee did Jesus make during this year? Mention the circumstances of the first journey. Why were the disciples sent by themselves on the other? What were the effects?

V. FROM THE THIRD PASSOVER TO THE FOURTH.

(a). To the Feast of Tabernacles.

1. Where did Christ keep His third Passover? Why did He not go up to Jerusalem? Recount some of the works done by Him at

this time. What place out of Canaan, or at least on its borders, did Christ visit soon after His third Passover? Why did He go, and what occurred there?

2. Where did He go afterwards? Mention His miracles there.

3. When about to leave Galilee, and end His labours there, what cities did He upbraid for their unbelief? Specify His principal works at Capernaum?

4. When did the Transfiguration take place? What disciples attended Him on the mountain, and where else did they accompany Him without the others? What miracle was performed after the Transfiguration?

5. What was the Feast of Tabernacles? Narrate the circumstances under which Jesus went to Jerusalem. Which way did He go? What occurred in Samaria? Who were the seventy? When, and with what object, did Jesus send them on their mission?

(b). From the Feast of Tabernacles to the Feast of Consecration.

1. What were the chief occurrences at Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles? What are the various opinions concerning the tour of Jesus between these two feasts?

2. We assume that at this time, the conversation between Martha and Mary, the return of the seventy, the blessing of little children, the request of Salome on behalf of her sons, and the passage through Jericho, took place. Give details of all these events.

(c). From the Feast of Consecration to the last Passover.

1. What was the Feast of Consecration? Where is Jesus said to have been during this feast?

2. Whither did Jesus go from this feast? When had He visited this place before? What event called Him thence? Why did the first three Evangelists omit all mention of a miracle so remarkable as the raising of Lazarus? How many persons did Jesus raise from the dead? When were they raised, having regard to this division of time by Passovers?

3. Whither and why did Jesus retire from Bethany? When and why did He return thither? In what does John's account of the supper at the house of Simon the leper differ from the narratives of the other Evangelists? How do you reconcile them?

4. Detail Christ's travels, words, and works during the week of His Passion, day by day until the Thursday.

5. When did they eat the Passover? Recount the principal incidents in the garden, the courts, and at the Crucifixion.

6. When was Jesus buried? How do you reckon His time in the tomb at three days and nights?

7. Mention His principal appearances after His resurrection.

8. When and whence did Jesus ascend to Heaven, and who witnessed His ascension?

One tangible advantage accruing from this method has been the unifying of the labours of the adult classes in the schools; and inasmuch as these questions are usually issued at the end of the year for public examination thereon to be held in summer, a subject of inquiry is thus supplied for Bible classes on week evenings throughout the winter months. The pastor whose time is wholly occupied with preaching (most often three times a day) on Sunday, is able to preside at these Bible classes, and his connection with them is often as much to his own advantage as to those under his charge. The Sunday engagements of the pastors will incidentally explain (and which in justice to them ought to be specially notified) what Mr. Symons describes as "their neglect of Sunday Schools," and which he deploras as a loss to the teachers of "competent persons to direct and stimulate them." The absence, far from being the result of neglect, is not a matter of choice but of necessity. A whole district generally labours in the same subjects, each division of the school in its own particular branch, and at the general meeting held at the end of the school year, all the schools assemble at some central place to answer publicly those questions and others arising from them propounded at the time by the examiner. These annual meetings are perhaps more general now throughout the country than they were in the days of Mr. Charles; but much of the simultaneous answers which was the charm of those days, has now given place to possibly less demonstration, but it is to be hoped more thoughtfulness and consequently more real and permanent benefit. One service in connection with these annual "associations," as they are called, is usually devoted to congregational singing, which has been always very closely allied with Sunday-School work; and to awarding prizes for the best essays and other compositions sent in for adjudication some time before; and also to distributing certificates for learning by heart the catechisms of the various denominations as the result of a test carried on at the different

schools by duly appointed examiners against the great public day. Taken altogether, a vast amount of energy is awakened in connection with these school associations in districts where the institutions are in a healthy and flourishing condition.

Of late years a considerable impetus has been given to Sunday-School work by a system of written examinations and competitions organized for different districts. This is nothing more in principle than the old *pwnc* preparation, and which was an essential part of school work from the beginning. The modifications introduced into the working of that principle consist in merely specifying the subject, but without any questions whatever supplied beforehand to serve as a guide; in requiring the answers to be given in writing and not orally; and in the questions being a series submitted for the first time to the candidate at a certain sitting, to be answered there and then. The extent of the district varies from the ordinary school district to a whole county. As to the classification of candidates it corresponds to that usually adopted for the school associations—viz., children, youths, and adults. The following were the classes and subjects selected for one of these county districts:—

I. The senior class, open to all ages. Subject.—The book of Acts, its history, contents, and relation to the Epistles.

II. The middle class, those under 25 years of age. The Epistle of James, its history and contents.

III. The junior class, children under 16 years of age. The history of Saul, David, and Solomon.

A period of nine or twelve months is generally given for preparation. Each chapel, if it supplies no fewer than six candidates, is constituted a centre for holding the examination. Some of the local men are appointed to preside at the sitting whose duty is to see that everything is carried on fairly in the time fixed to write out the answers. All the papers are collected together from the various centres, and sent to the examiner to be adjudicated and classified. Prizes of different values are given to the foremost in each class, and certificates to all who obtain a certain percentage of the marks. In fact the whole system is only an adaptation of the Cambridge and Oxford Local Examinations to Scriptural subjects and Sunday-School work.

To the county of Montgomery the honour is believed to belong

of having first instituted these examinations—the first having been held there on the 7th of May, 1875. But now most of the counties of both parts of the Principality have followed in the wake. It is evident that this plan could not have been adopted in the days of Mr. Charles, owing to the lack of general education, and the inability of the great mass of the population to commit their thoughts to writing; but with the multiplication of Board and other schools in the country, the plan has not been only proved feasible, but eminently successful. The combination of the two methods, of *viva voce* answering at the annual associations with the written answers at the local examinations, calls into play the three kinds of exercises mentioned by Bacon as necessary to a man's complete education. The reading in preparation for both maketh the *full* man; the speaking in the oral examination maketh the *ready* man; and the writing in the local competition maketh the *accurate* man.

It is a direct proof of the suitability of the principle of the Sunday School for all ages and for the different degrees of civilization and Christian culture, that so few essential changes have been found necessary to be introduced into the system in the space of a hundred years; and this is more evident when it is remembered that the epoch now referred to has been eminently one of progress and development in all the arts and sciences. And further the vitality of the system is apparent from the success with which it has coped with a very rapid increase of population; and the readiness with which it has secured the aid of the collateral improvements of the age to the attainment of its own peculiar ends. It is not intended to be implied that the system has been perfect in either the comprehensiveness of the scheme or in the details of execution, but enough has been done in the past to warrant a fond hope of still greater progress in the future. We shall, however, defer, as a matter of discussion for the final chapter, the improvements which we deem essential in order to adapt the system still more to the spirit and requirements of the age.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES, AND THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Scarcity of Bibles in the Principality at the beginning of the nineteenth century—The dearth increased by the multiplication of schools—Mary Jones of Abergynolwyn, “The little Welsh girl without a Bible”—A full relation of her story—How connected with the formation of the Bible Society—Ground prepared by the Rev. T. Jones of Creaton—The exact parts played by Mr. Charles and Mr. Joseph Hughes, respectively, in the drama—A letter from Mr. Joseph Tarn to Mr. Charles—The true claims of Mr. Hughes to be called the “Father of the Society”—The inquiry summed up—Wales the first object of the Society’s care—The number of Bibles sent to Wales by the Society from 1806 to 1885—Welshmen’s liberality towards the funds of the Society—Statistics for 1880—Incidents in the life of Mary Jones, an index of the general feeling—The present custody of “Mary Jones’s Bible.”

It has been observed that the Bible Society “grew out of a want”—the want of Wales. This want was the natural result of the multiplication of Sunday Schools. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge issued an edition of 10,000 copies of the Bible, complete, in 1799, but such was the demand at the time that the whole edition was consumed in a few months. By the spring of 1800, a Welsh Bible on sale, was as rare an article as it ever had been. The last named society, too, had turned a deaf ear to every appeal asking for a further supply of Bibles for Wales. We can easily imagine that Mr. Charles in his peregrinations amongst the hills and dales of the Principality had met with many a little girl and boy whose soul longed, and eyes melted to have a Bible for their possession and use; but writers and orators for many years have been referring to one particular girl whose tears so much affected him that he made the ever-memorable appeal to the Religious Tract Society in London, which led to the formation of

the Bible Society. The form in which the story has appeared in its abridged form is, that Mr. Charles, meeting a little girl in the streets of Bala, asked her where the last Sunday text was. She replied with tears, that she had not been able to get at a Bible that week, so as to learn the text, that she usually went two miles over a rugged road every Monday to the nearest house where there was a Bible, but that the stormy weather had prevented her from carrying out her practice that week. Mr. R. O. Rees, of Dolgelley, a warm supporter of the Bible Society, and a well-known author in Wales, who died early in 1881, has been able to trace the origin of this pathetic story, and in January, 1879, he published full particulars of it, in a little tract, entitled, "*Mary Jones, y Gymraes fechan heb yr un Bibl*" (Mary Jones, the little Welsh girl without a Bible). The substance of this little volume had previously appeared in *The Sunday at Home*, for December, 1878.* As the author remarks, this little incident, though simple and unimportant in itself, has acquired a meaning and a note as being a connecting link in the chain of causes which terminated in the formation of the Bible Society, and so exemplifying in a peculiar manner, "What great results from small beginnings rise."

From this little book we gather that Mary Jones was born in a small tenement called Ty'n y ddol, Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, a small hamlet lying in a narrow but romantic valley at the southern foot of Cader Idris, in the year 1784. At that time this district, like all others in Wales similarly situated, was remote and inaccessible; but since the introduction of railways into the country the aspect of things has entirely changed; so this nook is now within a nice walking exercise to the terminus of the narrow-gauge line from Towyn, Merioneth, to Abergynolwyn. When Mary was ten years of age, Mr. Charles established one of his circulating schools at Abergynolwyn, under the charge of John Ellis, afterwards of Barmouth. The usual adjunct of day school in a place being the introduction of a Sunday School, for the sake of others who could not become day-scholars, as well as for those who could be members of both, so here, also, the double organization began to flourish

* *Sunday at Home* for 1878, p. 782. Title, "Pages for the Young. A Little Seed, and a Great Tree—Charles y Bala, D.R." The same story has been further amplified and illustrated in a very neat little volume by the British and Foreign Bible Society, entitled, "From the Beginning; or, The Story of Mary Jones and her Bible, retold by M. E. R."

very soon, under the watchful eye and strenuous hand of John Ellis. One of his earliest scholars was Mary Jones, and though she had to travel about two miles of rough and exposed road to attend, she was a punctual and regular pupil at both, soon outstripping her fellows in her ability to remember and recite whole chapters of God's Word, as well as in ready appreciation of its meaning.

But Mary Jones had not a Bible of her own, neither could Ty'n y ddol, her native home, like most cottages in Wales at the time, boast of a complete copy of the Bible. The nearest Bible which Mary was permitted to use, lay in a farmhouse about two miles from her home. She had free access to this whenever she pleased; and to this borrowed Bible she was seen to come every week, to read it, search it, and treasure its chapters in her memory, for the school on Sunday. For six long years she repeated her practice almost without intermission, at the same time maturing her plans for obtaining a Bible of her own, if possible. For this purpose she had been in the habit of saving every copper she could get, so that by the time she was sixteen years of age, in the year 1800, she thought the sum total was sufficient to enable her to buy a copy of the new edition of the Welsh Bible issued the previous year. She consulted a local preacher, or exhorter, in her neighbourhood, of the name of William Hugh—who was considered an oracle in the district in all matters concerning the eternal welfare of his flock—if he knew where she could get a Bible. He replied that no Bible was to be had on sale anywhere nearer than Bala, with Mr. Charles, and he was afraid that all the Bibles he had received from London had been sold months ago. She had between twenty-five and thirty miles to go from her home to Bala, but notwithstanding the distance, and the uncertainty whether she could get a copy after going, she was determined to encounter all risks in order to try to realize the wish of so many years.

On a fine morning in the spring of 1800, after having got up with the dawn, she is described as undertaking her long journey to Bala. She had secured the loan of a wallet, to bring the treasure intact home, if heaven and Mr. Charles should grant her what she desired. She had shoes too, to put on, when she entered the town of Bala, but she carried those in the wallet on her back, and walked barefooted all the way to her destination. The morning was remarkably fine, the genial air as it were kindly urging her on; the

blue sky above, with no threatening cloud to discourage her, and the great eye of heaven looking down upon her with the warmest affection. So far as nature around her foreshadowed the outcome of her adventure, nothing adverse or painful was suggested to her thoughts. Not so, however, did the issue prove. She reached



MARY JONES ON THE WAY—CADER IDRIS IN THE BACKGROUND.

Bala late, too late to see Mr. Charles that night, for it was one of his fixed rules always, when at home, to adhere to what he believed an essential condition of health, "Early to bed, and early to rise." William Hugh had given her instructions before going to Mr. Charles, to call on a venerable preacher in the town, named

David Edward, and tell her message to him. After hearing her simple recital, he was at once won over to take the deepest interest in her. Replying to her inquiries, he said, "Well, my dear girl, it is too late to see Mr. Charles to-night; he is accustomed to retire to rest early, but he gets up with the dawn in the morning. You shall sleep here to-night, and we will go to him as soon as he gets up to-morrow, that you may be able to reach home before night."

Next morning, David Edward wakes Mary up with the dawn, and they both turn their steps towards Mr. Charles's house. They see light in his study. Mr. Charles is up, and Mary's anxious and trying moment is come. David Edward knocks at the door, and Mr. Charles himself opens. Mr. Rees graphically and pathetically describes the interview. Having expressed his surprise at the early call of his old friend, he invites them up to his study. The venerable intercessor explains the message of his young *protégé*, and why they must disturb him so early. Mr. Charles questions Mary respecting her personal history, her knowledge of the Scriptures, and how she was able to attain to such an extensive acquaintance with their contents when she had no Bible. Her explanation of this mystery—the weekly visits to the neighbouring farmhouse for the space of six years in order to read and learn by heart chapters from a borrowed Bible, her diligent saving of every penny and halfpenny in order to make up the sum she now had in her pocket to buy a Bible of her own—greatly affects Mr. Charles, and he interposes with these words; "I am extremely sorry to see this little girl having come all the way from Llanfihangel to buy a Bible, and not one for her to be had. All the Bibles I had from London have been disposed of months ago, except a few copies, which, according to promise, I have reserved for a few friends. What I shall do for more Welsh Bibles, I know not." Mr. Charles speaks these words with marked compassion, but they pierce the ears and heart of his youthful visitor as so many pointed darts. They destroy all the floodgates of her heart. She bursts into sobs and cries over the whole house. What a disappointment! Years of the most intense longing to possess a complete Bible of her own; years of labour and anxiety to collect the coppers into her little treasury, having become void, altogether in vain! How mortifying! Nay, wait; the heart of the best benefactor of Wales, the father of the Sunday Schools and their thousands of children,

is not made of adamant. It is true he has been able to adhere to his intentions in favour of other friends notwithstanding the urgent appeals from his old friend David Edward, but now balls of innumerable tears, and arrows of heart-rending cries from the disappointed little stranger, begin to make breaches in his fortitude; and his decrees in favour of other pleaders are utterly scattered to the winds. "Well," says he, "my dear girl, I find you must have a Bible, however difficult it is for me to give you one without disappointing other friends; it is impossible for me to refuse you."

Then Mr. Charles hands over a Bible to Mary, and she hands over to him its price in money. If the little heroine before, wept from anguish of heart, she now weeps more, if possible, from joy of heart, that she has obtained such a complete victory over Mr. Charles. Her heart is so full of gratitude to her sympathizing benefactor, that her tongue, though attempting it, fails to utter a word. But her eyes come to the rescue of the tongue. They weep transparent pearls of thanksgiving to him, as she deposits the long-wished treasure in the wallet to carry home. Her tears are contagious; Mr. Charles weeps, and David Edward weeps on looking at them. "If you are pleased, my girl, to get a Bible," said Mr. Charles to her, "so am I much pleased in giving it to you. Read it often, treasure it in your heart, and be a good girl." "David Edward," he added, in his tears, "is not such a scene as this enough to melt the hardest heart—a young, poor, intelligent girl, obliged thus to walk all the way from Llanfihangel here, a distance of over fifty miles between coming and going, and barefooted too, did you not say? to get a Bible! The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, which used to print Welsh Bibles and Testaments since the beginning of the last century, has peremptorily refused to supply the schools of Wales with any more Bibles and Testaments. But this little intelligent girl has so much affected me that I cannot rest without discovering some other means of meeting the great cry of our country for the Word of God." We can easily imagine that Mary Jones tripped over her journey home with lighter steps than those she had in leaving it; and the contents of her wallet instead of adding to her burden, directly served to inspire her with fresh courage and joy. She afterwards, when an old woman, eighty-two years of age, on the brink of her grave, wept for joy when telling Mr. Rees' informant

of Mr. Charles's mellow and heavenly spirit, and his gracious words speaking to her on that memorable morning, though a poor and strange girl, disturbing him at so untimely an hour.

Two years after, Mr. Charles was supplying at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel, Spafelds. He embraced the opportunity at the meeting of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society which met in London, December, 1802, of bringing before their notice the need of Wales and her Sunday Schools for the divine textbook. Through his exertions and those of Mr. Joseph Tarn, the assistant secretary of the committee, the members had come together in a strong muster. The chairman was the Rev. Matthew Wilks, and there were present also Revs. J. Hughes, J. Townsend, Dr. Steinkopff, J. Owen, the secretary, J. Tarn, and many influential lay members. After completing the ordinary transactions of the society, Mr. Tarn introduced Mr. Charles to the meeting, at the same time explaining his special object in attending. Mr. Charles proved the crying need of Wales for Bibles and Testaments. After referring to many special cases, he came to his climax with a touching account of his interview with Mary Jones and David Edward as already related. This produced the deepest impression upon all the committee, and the Rev. Joseph Hughes readily realizing that the case of the little Welsh girl was but an index of thousands of others throughout the world, exclaimed with profound feeling, "Mr. Charles, if a society of this description for Wales, why not for the kingdom, and indeed for the whole world?" This agitation was kept up until the British and Foreign Bible Society was completely organized in March, 1804, and the first resolution of the society was to provide an edition of Welsh Bibles and Testaments. They first inquired, as has ever been the practice in like circumstances, whether a previous revision might not be necessary; and since this was the case, some delay necessarily took place, so that the supply of 20,000 Bibles, and 5000 large Testaments, printed for the first time by stereotype plates, was not ready for distribution until July, 1806. An eye-witness thus describes its reception:—"When the arrival of the cart was announced which carried the first sacred load, the Welsh peasants went out in crowds to meet it, and welcomed it as the Israelites did the ark of old, drew it into the town, and eagerly bore off every copy as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young people

consumed the whole night in reading it, and labourers carried it with them to the fields, that they might enjoy it during the intervals of their labour." *

We have, in the above remarks, given the simple narrative of the connection between the wants of Wales and the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, without offering a note or comment on any of the incidents, in order not to break the chain of sequences which unites the simple, unsophisticated, and enthusiastic Mary Jones to the grand, noble, yea heavenly institution, which is now fairly on the way of realizing its universal motto, "Beibl i bawb o bobl y byd" (A Bible to all the people of the world). Many points, however, may be, and indeed have been, critically discussed, having reference to the exact and peculiar place of each individual and circumstance in bringing about this glorious result. Most prominent among the individuals whose exact shares in the production of the society have been keenly weighed and estimated, stand out in bold relief the names of Mr. Charles of Bala and Mr. Joseph Hughes the baptist minister of Battersea. Mr. Charles's share arose directly from his agitation to get the wants of Wales supplied. Still it must be conceded that in thus agitating he did not enter altogether on fallow ground, the Rev. Thomas Jones, curate of Creaton, in Northamptonshire, had done much to enlist the sympathy of the English with Wales, by various appeals between 1791 and 1802. He is said to have paid a visit to Wales on the first of these years, soon after the revival to which we have referred in a preceding chapter,† by which he discovered that the need of Bibles had been rendered more urgent than what was already felt, by the immediate consequence of the extension of the circulating and Sunday Schools. The craving which he witnessed produced so great an impression upon his mind, that he corresponded much with Mr. Charles, after he went home, on the subject, and made strenuous efforts to get the deficiency supplied. It was he who first made application to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in 1792, to print an edition of 10,000 copies of the Welsh Bible, and even went so far as to offer security of payment for 5000 copies as soon as printed. Strange to say, after promising to undertake the work, reluctantly no doubt, the engagement was afterwards broken off, on the ground, notwithstanding all the clear

* "The Book and its Story," pp. 236, 237.

† p. 253.

proofs to the contrary, that such an edition was not required. Mr. Jones, however, persisted in his entreaty, and interested his diocesan, Dr. Madan, the bishop of Peterborough, in the matter, through whose influence the Board passed a resolution, in 1796, to print the number specified. The edition was not out before 1799, and being offered for sale at one-half the cost price, was no sooner in the market than sold, though "not one-fourth part of the country," as Mr. Jones remarks, "was supplied." Neither the solicitations of Mr. Jones, the influence of the Bishop, nor the intercession of other parties, could induce the society to issue another single copy. Being deterred probably in 1799, by the expense which the further publication would involve, it is somewhat unaccountable to see the same society, in 1805, declaring its intention of issuing an edition of 20,000 copies of the Welsh Bible, and actually publishing several editions contemporaneously with the issues of the Bible Society though the exact number is not known.* When Mr. Jones found this society turning a deaf ear to his entreaties, he conceived a plan to get a large edition published at Chester by means of liberal subscriptions from the friends of Wales, so as to be able to offer copies to the poor at an attainable price. But in this, too, his efforts were doomed to disappointment. At the same time, it can be safely asserted that the seed he was sowing in tears, as it were, did not remain unproductive, for Mr. Charles, in his more successful efforts with the members of the Religious Tract Society, was only reaping, in a certain sense, with joy, the produce of the seed scattered with such patriotic and Christian zeal by his less-known predecessor.

The question has been very warmly discussed on more than one occasion and in more than one place, whether Mr. Charles of Bala or Mr. Joseph Hughes of Battersea was the true originator of the Bible Society? It is evident at the outset that this is a more curious than useful or important inquiry, for it resolves itself into the discussion—while the two factors are known to have been the actual productive causes of the institution, which of the two would have been the more likely to produce it, the one independent of the other? To us at present it seems more in harmony with our avowed object to prove that it was the multiplication of Sunday Schools, particularly in Wales, which occasioned the forming of an organization for putting into the hands of the people of Britain and

* "Gwyddoniadur," vol. i. p. 640.

of all other lands, the Holy Scriptures in all their purity and fulness. In the prosecution of this object, we cannot avoid stumbling over Mr. Charles's name; for the great subject of his meditations in the day time, and of his dreams in the night, was how to further this good cause of founding schools with which the circulation of the Bible was so nearly connected both as the result of, and means towards, their multiplication. At the same time, no one can fail to see that the part performed by Mr. Hughes was as essential as that of Charles, to the formation of the society. If the latter, after the thought had occurred to him while in London, one morning awake in bed, brooding over the matter of having a Bible Society formed for Wales—and he went no further than Wales—had not providentially met with Mr. Tarn, and so getting the way smoothed for him to unfold his plan at the meeting of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society held on the 7th December, 1802, we cannot conceive how the society could have been originated. If, on the other hand, Mr. Hughes had not uttered, at that meeting, the memorable words, "Surely a society might be formed for the purpose, and if for Wales, why not also for the empire and the world," and had not strenuously worked to realize the object, it is quite evident that Mr. Charles's appeals would have only resulted in a local and not a cosmopolitan society. But just as the soil is necessary as well as the seed for fructification, so the part acted by each of these distinguished men was as essential as the other to the production of this grand result. To ask, therefore, which of the two was the originator of the society is as futile as if one should ask, "Whether it is Bahr el Azrek or the Bahr el Abiad which makes up the Nile?" when it is well known that the name is only applied to the confluence of the two; or to borrow another comparison already used, "Who were the authors of the victory at Waterloo,—whether the English, who withstood the onset of the enemy for a whole trying day, or the Prussians, who came forward at the end of the day and completed the rout?"

This is the view taken by Mr. Charles himself, of the share he had in the concern, though far from appropriating any praise or glory to himself. Giving an account of the formation of the society in an appendix to a small volume, entitled "A Compendium of the History of Mr. Kicherer," he says, "while I was consulting in London with some well-wishers to religion and piety, how a large

and cheap edition of the Bible could be had in Welsh, and how, if possible, a permanent repository of Bibles could be procured, that there might be no more a scarcity of them among the poor Welsh, the Lord put in the hearts of some of those pious men with whom I was conversing the kind and noble design, to form a society to distribute the Bible, not only in our country, but also in foreign countries, whether Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan, that there might be no nation under heaven, nor any individual in the whole world, without this precious treasure, if desirous of possessing it. At first sight, the undertaking appeared, however desirable in itself, yet so formidable that it was hardly worth while to cherish the design with a view of accomplishing it. But through the hand of God upon them, this glorious cause pressed so heavily and continuously upon the minds of some of the pious and worthy men with whom I conversed, that they were prevailed upon to make the attempt of realizing it, notwithstanding every consideration of discouragement. Several of them met together to consult upon the matter. In the first meeting (this was the meeting of 7th December, 1802), I was present; and when expatiating upon the desirability and great blessedness of such an institution, the remarks on the subject so affected their minds, that they shed in common, tears of joy, at the prospect of being able to succeed.”*

As further evidence that this was not Mr. Charles's own view alone respecting his connection with the society, the following letter, written to him by Mr. Tarn, describing the meeting held at the London Tavern, March 7th, 1804, to organize the society, confirms the truth of some of the above remarks:—

“London, March 7, 1804.

“DEAR FRIEND,

“With hearty pleasure I take up my pen to acquaint you of the result of the numerous and respectable meeting held this day at the London Tavern, for the formation of a Bible Society, and in which the foundation was laid, as I hope, for circulating the Holy Scriptures more extensively than was hitherto seen.

“There were present at the meeting, I should think, from two to three hundred very respectable men belonging to the various Christian communities; and there was to be heard but the com-

* Life of the author, prefacing Mr. Charles's Dictionary, p. xiii.

pletest unanimity, and all to be seen as if under a deep feeling of the value and importance of the work, especially as regards its wide and catholic object. The chair was taken by Grenville Sharpe, Esq.; from twelve to two in the afternoon the matter was under consideration, and the work resolved upon to be commenced unitedly according to the plan already prepared. The resolutions will be seen to-morrow or the day after in several of the newspapers. A subscription list was opened and £700 promised on the spot, and we can certainly expect a large addition to this when the undertaking is made generally known.

“The deficiency of Bibles in Wales received special attention, and was deeply impressed upon the meeting, and this, I hope will be one of the first matters to be considered by the committee. The Rev. Mr. Owen was a great support to the cause, by speaking without any previous appointment, after the other friends had gone through the various parts arranged for them. He recommended the scheme in a powerful, rational, and Scriptural speech, proving that the society was laid on the sure foundation of the word and promises of God.

“My dear brother, we cannot but rejoice together when we consider that this work had its beginning in a conversation we had together one morning which will never be forgotten. Hence I was induced at the next meeting of the committee of the Tract Society to mention the scarcity of Bibles in Wales; and then it was that the flame was kindled which now breaks out, and which I hope will burn brighter and brighter till that glorious day of universal knowledge come, when we shall no more teach our brother saying, ‘I know the Lord: but all shall know him from the least to the greatest.’ To the Lord be all the glory; as for us who are utterly unworthy of the least of his mercies, our duty is to account it an inestimable privilege to be permitted in any degree to be instrumental to increase the knowledge of that salvation of which we hope that we are partakers.

“Now let us unite in supplications, that the stone which is as it were ‘cut out of the mountain without hands,’ and which we have seen to-day becoming a hill, increase until it become a mountain, to cast down the castles of sin and of Satan from east to west, and from pole to pole; and so, though we shall not live to see the bright day, we may rejoice together that we laid down the first

stone of a building which, as we hope, will remain, and be the joy of the whole earth. Soliciting your prayers, and those of the Welsh brethren, for the success of the work,

“I am, yours in the fellowship of the Gospel,
“JOSEPH TARN.”

For a similar reason Mr. Hughes has been called the *Father of the Society*, not so much because of the words he spoke to mark out the extent of its boundaries, as for the direct labours he bestowed in organizing and supporting it. Mr. Alers Hankey, who was present at its first meeting, looks at the matter in this light: speaking of Mr. Hughes, he says, “On the labours of our departed friend during this important, and to all connected with it, anxious period, I found the claim that his name should be transmitted to future ages as the ‘Father of the British and Foreign Bible Society,’ and that claim, I conceive, rests on so firm a basis that no one should dare dispute it. With regard to the uncertain honour of having been the speaker of the words dropped at the meeting of the 7th of December, 1802, after hearing Mr. Charles’s report, even if it could be certain of the words themselves, they were but the expression of the feeling of all present, and were too vague to convey then any definite meaning. *Some one said something.* The design of Providence was thus realized, and beyond this everything is uncertain. I do not deny that he might be the person who spoke them, whatever they were—the probability perhaps is in his favour—but the claim to this at the time was not considered to be of any importance, until Mr. Owen undertook to write the history of the society, and the claim to be the author of the words rested on Mr. Hughes’s recollection only. But his claim to be looked upon as its father, as I have already said, rests on a much firmer foundation. From the very first moment that the spark was kindled he fanned it with all his zeal until it became a mighty flame.”

Summing up this inquiry (which after all is a mere question of accident), it is far easier to prove that the starting of the society was occasioned by the want of Wales, than to arrive at a decision which was the most immediate subsequent link in the chain of cause and effect—whether Mr. Charles’s appeal to a number of godly people to devise some means to supply this want, at the

same time suggesting a society, or Mr. Hughes's approval of the idea, and the extended aim of such a society to the welfare, not of Wales only, but of the whole human race. Altogether, it seems a greater honour, indeed, to have been the means of creating this want of Bibles, through years of unwearied application in travelling, exhorting, organizing, and supporting, than to have hit in a happy moment on a plan for its supply. Really there was nothing original in the idea. Societies already existed for very similar purposes; for promoting Christian knowledge, for the extension of Christian literature generally. Here was only a limitation of the principle to one book, certainly the best of books, and an extension of area beyond the limits of one language and kingdom, to "every tribe, language, people, and nation."

It has been already mentioned that the first-fruits of the society's operations was to supply the need of Wales by issuing, in 1806, an edition of 20,000 Bibles, and 5000 Testaments. Nor did its generosity end in this single outburst. Ever since, amid its multifarious engagements, translating the sacred text into the languages of the world, meeting the appeals of missionaries from all parts for a supply of Bibles, and organizing auxiliaries, like a widespread banyan tree, at home and abroad, the little Principality of Wales has always received a first-born's share of its attention and liberality.

Mr. Charles, before his death in 1814, had the unspeakable pleasure of seeing that Wales had received 100,000 copies of Bibles and Testaments from the British and Foreign Bible Society within the ten years of its first formation.* Up to March 31, 1880, there have been issued to Wales of Bibles and Old Testaments, 824,186; of New Testaments and New Testaments with Psalms, 1,062,407; of portions of Old Testament, 53,920; of portions of New Testament 35,200, making a total of 1,975,713. Besides these, 89,086 copies of Welsh and English New Testaments have been issued, and 50 portions of New Testaments for the blind. Up to 1875 Wales had received 1,737,479 Bibles and Testaments, so that in the five years ending March 31, 1880, it received 238,234 copies, or an average per year of 47,647; and up to 1875, 77,086 Welsh and English Testaments, making in the five years ending 1880, 12,000 with an average per year of 2400. Taking this as the basis of calculation

* "Methodistiaeth Cymru," vol. i. p. 348.

for the next five years, by the year 1885, or the Sunday School Centenary in Wales, Wales will have received in all from the Society 2,213,947 Bibles and Testaments, and 101,806 Welsh and English Testaments, or more than one every fifty years to every man, woman, and child, according to the average population of the latter part of the century. Surely no people under the sun are better supplied with copies of God's Holy Word.

The care taken for Wales by the society will be shown also by the number of different editions and sizes of Welsh Bibles and Testaments issued from the commencement. In all six different editions of the former have been prepared, bound in twenty-six different styles; and nine different editions of the latter, in twenty-nine different styles of binding. The latest acquisition is the whole Bible with marginal references, and at the end six maps illustrative of Biblical geography, which must be a great help to the teacher with his class.

Wales, on the other hand, has never forgotten the claims of the society upon its sympathy and support. Ungrateful in the extreme, and entirely at variance with the teaching of the Blessed Book so much prized and multiplied in the land, would have been a forgetfulness of such a consistent and extensive benefactor; and one tangible proof of the influence of the Bible over the minds of the people is the honourable support given to the society both by deed and word. In the *Evangelical Magazine* for December, 1815, it is reported that the society's accounts for the first two years of its existence show that over £2626 was collected by the various congregations of the Principality towards its funds. The whole contributions for those years for England and Wales amounted to £10,137 17s. 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ d., thus showing that Wales supplied more than one-fourth.* This sum came not from the higher class and the rich, but from the common people and the poor, the school children being among the most prominent according to their limited ability. On many occasions it is said that the ministers who brought the claims of the society before the schools and the congregations had to restrain the liberality of some, and take but one-half of what they were willing to give. Once a servant-girl, whose yearly wages only amounted to £3, was observed to place a guinea in the collec-

* See also Society's Annual Reports for 1805-6. For the latter of these two years England's share was £2637, Wales, £2004.

tion box, which she had covered with a halfpenny in order not to draw attention to the sum, as she felt it was out of proportion to her means. There are several proofs that the English friends were quite taken by surprise at this unexpected flow of Welsh liberality, and in one connection at least, as has already been mentioned,* the effect was anything but agreeable to the contributors. Mr. Charles complains in 1808 that all the annual aids from England, except one, towards his circulating schools, had suddenly and unexpectedly ceased. When he went to inquire for the cause he learnt that the English friends of the schools finding the Welsh people able to contribute so honourably towards the Bible Society had come to the natural conclusion that their support was no longer necessary. But their liberality towards the society received this shock without being disturbed. And to their credit it must be said that theirs was not an extraordinary ebullition of feeling consequent upon the warmth of the "first love," Wales has kept up "her primacy of honour" as compared with all other countries in this respect until now. The following table, comparing Wales and one county (Merionethshire) with England and two of its principal towns in the matter of free contributions and purchases of Bibles for the year 1880, will serve to show how "poor little Wales," as the country is often called, so easily bears the palm from her richer and more populous neighbour.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN ENGLAND AND WALES IN THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS "THE BIBLE SOCIETY," IN 1880.

District.	Population in 1881.	Free Contribu- tions.	Amount per 100 of Population.	Purchases.	Amount per 100 of Population.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Wales	1,359,895	7166 18 8	0 10 6½	2177 13 6	0 3 2½
Merioneth	54,798	873 14 11	1 11 10½	219 2 11	0 8 0
England	24,608,391	42,849 16 1	0 3 5¾	23,415 10 11	0 1 10¾
London	3,814,571	2017 3 5	0 1 0¾	1891 10 9	0 0 11¾
Liverpool	552,000	539 0 0	0 1 11¼	1351 8 4	0 4 10¾

The story told by the above table is at once evident. Wales in proportion to the population gives three times as much as England towards sending the Bible to all parts of the world; and one of the

* See p. 170.

counties of Wales, Merioneth contributes about thirty times more than London towards the same object. The same faithfulness is shown by the Welsh when they settle in the towns of England. Their circumstances here being not so much unlike, and the comparison therefore more just, the superiority of the Welsh over their English fellow-citizens becomes at once more striking and conclusive. In Liverpool, for instance, the Welsh population, though the number is not exactly known, is never put above one-fifth of the English portion, and yet the Welsh Auxiliary Society of that town, for the year 1880, actually contributed only £14 less than the whole English portion. In Manchester the Welsh are a mere handful, not one-thirtieth part of the English population, still the sum collected towards the propagation of Holy Scriptures to all parts of the world by the Cambrian branch there, was £115, while the English only collected £897 17s. 0d. To keep up with the Welsh, the English portion ought to have contributed at least £3450, and to be equal to Merionethshire, it ought to have given over £6000.

Love for the Bible and a desire to multiply copies of it over all the world, are always concomitant feelings; the former being the productive cause of the latter. A proof of the existence of this desire in the Welsh, apart from its cause, has now been furnished through the cold abstractions of statistics; but the connections between the effect and its cause cannot easily be realized except when presented as working through the pulsations of living hearts, and in the actions of laborious hands. Instances might be quoted throughout the length and the breadth of the land, of this exuberant love of the Bible resulting in various forms of sacrifices and self-denial for its circulation; but perhaps in none has it been so strikingly exhibited as in that simple maid whose story has already been related in connection with the formation of the Bible Society. Some further incidents respecting her and her Bible, illustrating as they do, at once both this deep-rooted liberality of the people, and the nature of the work done by the Sunday Schools of her days, will, it is hoped, form a fitting conclusion to our remarks on the intimate relation between the Sunday Schools of Wales and the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Mary Jones having become possessed of a Bible, proceeded at once to carry out her first resolution, which was to read it through

minutely, word for word. She applied herself more assiduously than ever to read, search, and learn by heart chapters from her *own* new Bible. Some portion of it, so far as her health and circumstances permitted, she read every day, during the whole of the sixty-six years that she lived after buying it. She read it consecutively four times over, and committed whole books of it to memory, viz., the book of Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, the Gospel and Epistles of John, the Epistles of Paul to the Romans and Ephesians, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and Mr. Charles's own "*Instructor*." She continued a faithful member of the Sunday School as long as her physical strength enabled her to walk there. It was Mr. Charles's practice, as we have already found, to hold "school associations," where many schools would come together for public catechising. Mary Jones attended these with unflagging zeal in all places within a large district. Mr. Charles always expected to see the young girl from Llanfihangel in every meeting of the kind within her reach, and he was very seldom disappointed. To any question of unusual difficulty in Scriptural knowledge, he would look to this young disciple for the best answer; and very often did her ready and thoughtful remarks affect to tears of joy the large congregations always present at these gatherings. She lived for the latter part of her life at the village of Bryn-crug near Towyn, Merioneth, and became very zealous for the missionary causes. Here, from the advantageous position of her cottage, she devoted herself to the cultivation of bees, of which she had a very large number, and the excellence of her honey and wax was proverbial. Her yearly income from the honey she used for the support of herself and family, but she divided the proceeds from the wax between the Bible Society and the Missionary Society of the denomination to which she belonged. In favourable seasons that sum was very considerable from a woman in her humble circumstances. She was on very friendly terms with her bees. Whenever she paid a visit to their numerous habitations in the garden, they would welcome her with the most enthusiastic reception. She would hold a handful of them on the palm of her hand as fearlessly as if they were common flies. There is no account of any of them having ever stung her, though they never spared other intruders. She was gaining greater boldness amongst them every day, as she firmly believed, seeing how productive they

were, that they also were full of "the missionary spirit." When in the year 1854, a collection was made in her chapel, towards the million testaments for China, one half-sovereign was found in the heap of coppers and silver. At first it was thought it had been deposited on the plate by mistake. It was soon ascertained, however, that it was given with a full consciousness of its colour and value. This was the gift of the "poor widow" Mary Jones, which her zealous bees had enabled her to contribute. For many years she continued to draw consolation from her precious Bible. She was often seen directing her short footsteps to the Sunday School with her staff in one hand, and the Bible under her arm, until, depending on its faithful testimonies, she slept in Jesus on the 28th of December, 1866, aged eighty-two years. Since her death her Bible has had a history. On her death-bed it was given as a legacy to her pastor, Rev. Robert Griffith of Brynecrug, who gave it over to Mr. R. O. Rees together with a written account of the most striking facts in the life of Mary Jones, and the particulars of its purchase from Mr. Charles. In it is a record in Mary Jones's own handwriting that she bought it in the year 1800, at the age of sixteen years. Mr. Rees afterwards presented it to the library of the Calvinistic Methodist college at Bala, where Mr. Charles lived and where too she had bought it of him; since then the committee of the Bible Society have made a pressing request for it in order to honour it with a place in their library. The Bala college committee have at length acceded to the request, and in return for the favour, the committee of the Bible Society have presented both Mr. Rees and the Bala library with specially-bound copies of their latest edition with a note of a resolution explaining the circumstances, signed by the chairman. On Mr. Rees's copy is the following lithographed entry:—"Presented to Mr. R. O. Rees by the committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society in grateful acknowledgment of his services in connection with the gift of Mary Jones' Bible to the library of the Society, November, 1880. Shaftesbury (President). John Sharpe, Charles E. B. Reed (Secretaries)."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LATER YEARS OF CHARLES'S LIFE.

The last fifteen years of Mr. Charles's life the most abundant in general usefulness—His illness in 1799—Richard Owen's prayer for an extension of fifteen years to his life—His labours in preparing a revised copy of Bible for the press—At the call of the Irish Society visits Ireland—Leaves from his journal—General results—His assistance in directing the line of action taken by the Gaelic Society—Their tribute of acknowledgment—Literary labours in connection with Wales—A warm supporter of the London Missionary Society—A pastor at Chester—Direct aids given to his own denomination—The part taken in the first ordination of lay preachers—The vicar of Llanuwehllyn and the repentance theory—The probable solution—Direct references to Sunday-School labours during this period—Seeds of last illness sown in 1811—Gradual failing of health—Visits Barmouth—Machynlleth—Return to Bala—Feelings and sayings on his deathbed—Funeral—Unveiling of his statue in 1875—Speeches by J. Roberts, Esq., M.P., and others—Letter from Lord Shaftesbury—Judge Johnes's estimate of his work and character.

THE most important incidents in Mr. Charles's public life are undoubtedly connected with his labours on behalf of the Sunday Schools, and the spread of religious knowledge generally; his actions apart from these objects are not long to recount, nor perhaps remarkably interesting to unfold. Still, to those of our readers who are especially concerned in his biography, and who have no ready access to works exclusively devoted to this end, we presume that it would be gratifying to become acquainted with some of his principal acts in other connections up to the end of his comparatively short but eminently useful and well-spent life.

It is a remarkable fact that almost all his benefactions in connection with countries and objects beyond the Principality of Wales are comprised within the last fifteen years of his life—a period too, at one time which seemed very doubtful he would ever

have been permitted to add to his earthly existence, but which also affords another striking illustration of the truth that God's people are immortal so long as the work they have to accomplish remains uncompleted. He had been naturally endowed with a strong constitution, and a considerable amount of physical energy and power of endurance. This enabled him to travel about in the Lord's work through all extremes of weather, and cheerfully to put up with the humble and risky hospitality which often fell to his lot during his itineracies. Not seldom would he awake in the nights to find the few locks that had been left him fluttering in the wind, which had too easy an access to his bedroom through the chinks in the walls and roof; and it had been no wonder for him to see the snow by the morning forming another coverlet over the supply under which he had initiated his night's rest. For many years did he bear these hardships with apparent immunity. But in the beginning of the winter of 1799-1800 he also fell a prey to the severity of that inclement season. Crossing over the Migneint mountain, which lies between Festiniog and Bala, as he was returning from a tour through Caernarvonshire, on a bitterly cold night, the thumb of his left hand was so severely frost-bitten as to result in a long and painful affection. After trying several remedies and consulting many physicians, amongst whom was an eminent surgeon at Chester, he became reconciled to the advice that he could do nothing better than return home and submit to an amputation. The member was dislocated and entirely removed as far as the inner joint. This circumstance was the occasion of much affliction to him, to his family, and to all the churches which became acquainted with the case. Many were the prayers offered to heaven on his behalf—that the Lord would be pleased to spare him and grant him an extension of life, for the sake of his own glory and the promotion of his cause. In the prayer-meeting held by his own congregation at Bala, the attention of all present was specially but spontaneously drawn to the words of a simple-hearted and earnest Christian named Richard Owen. In his entreaty for the prolongation of Charles's life he referred to the Lord's words concerning Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 6, "Fifteen years more, O Lord," he pleaded; "we pray for the addition of fifteen years to the days of thy servant's life, and wilt thou not grant him fifteen years, O our God, for the sake of thy Church and thy cause." Whatever

explanation may be offered of the circumstance, it is a fact worthy of note that Mr. Charles actually terminated his earthly career within a few days of the end of the fifteen years, and that during this time he consolidated much of the good begun before, and extended his usefulness in many new directions.

His labours in connection with the new edition of the Welsh Bible were not altogether limited to his visit to London, and pleading for the formation of a society for securing its circulation ; on him too fell the great mental strain of preparing the copy for the press. This labour continued from 1804 to 1806. In order to produce the most perfect copy, both as regards orthography and punctuation, he is said to have collated eight previous editions of the Welsh Bible, and three of those which were considered best in English, carefully examining every verse and sifting every punctuation. In the years 1813, 1814, he was engaged in revising a copy of an octavo Bible for the British and Foreign Bible Society, taking as his foundation the edition published at Oxford in the year 1809 for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and which had been prepared by several eminent Welshmen at the invitation of the Bishops of St. David's and Bangor. This, Mr. Charles found pretty accurate, though not up to the standard of perfection which he had set up before his mind ; and since it was his ardent wish to procure a copy, perfect, full, and unblemished, for the benefit of his fellow-countrymen, he spared neither labour nor expense in the undertaking, without expecting either recompense or acknowledgment from any human being whatever. The work of revision was finished in August, 1814, a few weeks only before his death.

In the year 1807 his assistance was asked in furtherance of the object of a society which had then recently been formed with a view of improving the social and religious condition of the Irish population. The mass of that nation then as now was sunk in ignorance, and consequently easily duped into the errors of Popery. The nature of the aid required of Mr. Charles was to undertake, in conjunction with three others, a journey into Ireland, and through various parts of the island, to look into the moral and religious condition of the people, and to report on the desirability or otherwise of organizing a system of education for the poor Irish in their own tongue, as it was a question in debate whether it was prefer-

able to teach them through that medium or by means of the English language. His colleagues were Rev. D. Bogue, a Congregational minister at Gosport; Rev. J. Hughes, a Baptist minister; and Mr. Mills, a pious layman. Mr. Morgan, in his "Life of Mr. Charles," has detailed this tour with some minuteness, quoting much of Mr. Charles's diary, which it may be interesting to reproduce, seeing the attention claimed by Ireland at the present day. He says, "These four Christian tourists commenced their journey July 24, traversed the country mostly two and two for nearly a month, and returned August 30. Their report was published; and *much* of the good that has since been done in Ireland must no doubt be attributed to it. The observations then made by Mr. C., as we find it remarked in the *Evangelical Magazine* for November, 1815, 'led him more especially to desire that *schools might be established in every part of the country*; in which such as require it should be taught in their *native language*;' and had he lived to this day, when the Hibernian Society has now 111,952 children under instruction, his generous heart would have exulted with joy. . . .

"Mr. C., in his tour, kept a journal, which I have now in my possession. It is too long to be given whole, and too interesting to be left out entirely. Few things in it shall be entered here. It may be right to state before we proceed, that the Bible Society sent 1000 Testaments to Dublin, to be distributed by Mr. C. and his companions while travelling through the country.

"Mr. C. preached on Sunday, July 20, at Bethesda Chapel, Dublin.

"*Kilkenny*. Called on Rev. P. Roe, and met the Rev. G. C. of Ross, near Waterford—both evangelical, zealous, and successful. The carnal clergy oppose those that are evangelical more than they do the Popish priest.—At *Athy*, when Mr. Kielly preached in the court-yard, the Popish priest stood at the end of the lane to prevent any of his people to go and hear.

"*Waterford*, Aug. 3.—Religious people here, as everywhere else, in some degree infected with *Sandemanianism*. Sacrament every Sunday—administered without a minister; they spend their time in vain janglings, instead of laying themselves out in endeavouring to spread the gospel and save sinners who are perishing all around them.

"*Limerick*, Aug. 7.—This is a large, fine-built, populous town,

situated on the Shannon, the finest river in the British Empire.—The gospel preached in the church by J. and W. Hoare. Mr. B—— preached at the old Presbyterian meeting-house—served by an old Socinian minister and a young gay fellow—both cannot keep up a congregation. Were it not for the bounty allowed to dissenters, the meeting must have been shut up years ago; and it would have been as well if it had, as no good is done. M—— and J—— two evangelical ministers, met us at the chancellor's in the evening. J—— is very active in carrying on schools over the country—assisted by W—— Esq., and others in England—trains up schoolmasters—superintends the schools himself.

“*Tuam*, Aug. 10.—The poor in their cabins very civil and communicative, *but ignorant of the Bible to a man*, turned in to a few of them in every place; their ignorance of the Bible, the only source of real and permanent comfort, affected me much. They have been sadly neglected, indeed! I hope the time is drawing nigh for the Lord to show them mercy. The earth *must* be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; and as Ireland is a part of the earth, it must also be filled with this knowledge. This is a cheering consideration indeed. The clergy riot in wealth and luxury, unmindful of their duty. The priests make a prey of the people, whom they keep in ignorance for that purpose. The protestants of all denominations mind earthly things; and, therefore, the cause of God is neglected. Mercy or judgment must produce a change, and that speedily. Nothing wanting but zeal and piety in the Protestants and God's blessing to effect their conversion, just the same as other sinners.

“*Castlebar*, Aug. 12.—We saw a mountain in our way here, called Croaugh Patrick; from whence, the tradition is, St. Patrick beat all the serpents and venomous creatures from Ireland into the sea. A hermit dwells on this mountain, who is a half-witted man; and thousands flock here from all parts to perform *stations*, as they call them,—to repeat Ave Maria and Paternosters, walking barefooted around a stone or heap of stones. The hermit directs them in their devotions, for which he is paid. Rich people send him money, and he performs for them. There is a lake in Galaway, to which thousands resort every year to perform religious ceremonies, to obtain a blessing on their cattle, etc. They offer butter to it by throwing large lumps into it. . . .

“Near Castlebar is a well, consecrated to the Virgin Mary, frequented certain days in the year by about 20,000 people from different parts to perform *stations*. We saw several, fourteen miles off, going there barefooted. In their distress they vow pilgrimages to this well. There is a priest to direct them in their superstitious devotions, for which he is paid. (Several places were visited by them besides those named above; such as Castle Comar, Clonmel, Fermoy, Cork, Gort, Sligo, Bell-Turbah, Dunleer, Dundalk, Drogheda.)

“Aug. 19.—We came to Dublin, late in the evening, and lodged at Judge Kelly’s, where we were very kindly received.”

Appended to Mr. C.’s journal are the following sentiments, which explain the measures he thought should be pursued towards improving the religious state of Ireland. “I am of opinion that religion cannot be diffused in general among the Irish without *Bibles in their own language* and schools to teach them to *read Irish*. There are no elementary books in the language! Circulating charity schools might do wonders. Many parts of Wales in G. Jones’s time were as dark as Ireland.” *

One immediate result of this inspection was the issuing by the Hibernian Society, under whose auspices it had originated, of a great number number of Erse or Gaelic Testaments for the use of the poor, and the preparation forthwith, chiefly through Mr. Charles’s advocacy, of the whole Bible in the same tongue, the visitors having been particularly struck with the great proportion of the people still speaking the vernacular language. The evidence of these respectable and thoroughly qualified witnesses was also the direct means of rousing the sympathy and energy of many in England to assist in enlightening and evangelizing the sister island. Soon after, in addition to the Hibernian Society already mentioned, whose object was to establish and support schools, another society was organized, having as its special aim, the spread of the gospel through preaching. How sad to think with what meagre results, as evinced by the disturbances, the outrages, and assassinations of 1881 and 1882!”

When the news respecting the success of the circulating and Sunday Schools in Wales, reached the ears of some religious men whose hearts were grieving over the deep ignorance of so many of

* “The Life and Labours of Rev. T. Charles,” by Rev. Ed. Morgan, pp. 349–354.

the population of the Highlands of Scotland, they wrote to Mr. Charles asking for further information and instruction how to establish similar schools in these remote districts. They were sorely troubled to think that hundreds of thousands were unable to read the Bible in their own tongue—the Gaelic—or in any other language. The result of that appeal was the preparation by Mr. Charles of those elaborate letters which we have already inserted,* and to which we in this country owe so much for keeping on record the history of their formation, their mode of operation, and the immediate good they produced.

At a meeting held in Edinburgh, on the 16th January, 1811, the society for the support of Gaelic Schools was established, for the sole object of teaching the inhabitants of the Highlands and Island to read the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. The plan adopted by the Gaelic Society was the establishment of circulating schools, such as Griffith Jones had established in Wales nearly a century before, and of which the following opinion is pronounced by the committee in their report:—

“It now remains for this committee to lay before the meeting a plan which they consider as admirably adapted to this country, both in a physical and moral point of view. Were the plan itself theoretical, they could not have ventured to speak with confidence respecting it, but as it has been acted upon from 1730 up to the present day, in another quarter of the United Kingdom, very similar in many respects to our Highlands, your committee will not be considered precipitate in expecting the most beneficial effects to result from its adoption. We at present allude to the Principality of Wales. To suit the nature of that mountainous country, it was found expedient and necessary to adopt schools of an ambulatory kind, by which an ability to read has been widely diffused, and the first elements of instruction have been conveyed with much celerity from one valley to another. As, however, a most interesting account of the commencement, the progress, and present state of those measures, which have been found so successful in teaching the Welsh their native language, will be read to this meeting, the committee now proceed to mention a few particular regulations by which they hope that, under the blessing of God, similar effects may be produced in our own country.” (The report here alludes to the

* See pp. 172-175.

statement drawn up by Mr. Charles describing the nature and success of the circulating schools in Wales.)

By the year 1835 the committee of the Gaelic Society were enabled to declare:—

“That in the course of twenty-four years their teachers had visited not less than 540 districts, and, at a moderate computation, had taught nearly 70,000 persons to read the Scriptures, in their vernacular tongue, which, on any other system than that of circulating schools, would have been impossible, inasmuch as no other method presents itself of dealing with a scattered population, than to itinerate from station to station, abiding a limited period at each.”

The effect of this scheme on the extension of the English language which had been pointed out by both Mr. Griffith Jones and Mr. Charles, was fully realized in the case of these Scotch circulating schools. The report further remarks that:—

“A more extended diffusion of the English language was the immediate result—greater progress having been made in English reading and speaking, throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, since the introduction of Gaelic schools, than for centuries before; so that, if no higher object was in contemplation than the introduction of the English language, the most effectual mode of doing so would be through the medium of their own tongue.”

Sir T. Phillips remarks on this connection between the Gaelic schools and the Welsh circulating schools, that “Whilst from Bangor to Brecon everything in Wales is barren in the eyes of Education Commissioners, intelligent Scotchmen possessing a justly-vaunted system of national education of their own, discerned in the efforts of Welshmen, not only something to approve, but to imitate and transplant to their own mountain land.”*

In the year 1799, and from that to 1802, Mr. Charles, in conjunction with the Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh, brought out in parts the first volume of “The Spiritual Treasury” (Y Drysorfa Ysrydol). In the year 1803, he introduced a printing press to the town of Bala, and from that year until his death, issued 320,000 copies of the school books which he had prepared. During the same period the following works emanated from his pen:—“The Scripture Dictionary” (Y Geiriadur Ysgrythyrol), the greatest of his productions; the second volume of “The Spiritual Treasury,”

* Sir T. Phillips’s “Wales,” pp. 515, 516.

1809-13; and his "Vindication of the Welsh Methodists," in reply to a certain clergyman from Anglesea, who had tried to prove that some members of the denomination, in a secret way, were guilty of encouraging high treason. This little treatise is noted for the purity and beauty of its language, as well as for its eminently Christian spirit. In addition to these works, he commenced a Concordance to the Welsh Bible, but which he had no time to complete.

He was indefatigable in his labours to promote the good cause, whether directly in connection with Wales, or in supporting societies whose area of usefulness had no earthly bound or limit. Through the press, and by public appeals, he was the means, for years, of collecting considerable sums of money towards the support of The London Missionary Society; and in the year 1806, he was asked to preach the annual sermon in connection with its May meeting, selecting for his text, Isaiah x. 27, "And the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." Though most often in travels, he was not an entire stranger to the discharge of pastoral duties, for in the year 1802, we find him undertaking the oversight of several churches at Chester, which had been founded by the Rev. Phillip Oliver, but who, dying in the year 1800, had appointed Mr. Charles both trustee of the places of worship and administrator of the whole internal arrangements of the cause.

In his own connexion, he travelled much during the last fifteen years of his life (though his strength in this respect had been much reduced since the sickness which overtook him in 1799) to attend the Associations, and Monthly Meetings; he also made long preaching tours through all the counties of North Wales, and sometimes in South Wales too. It was he who drew up the "Rules regarding the proper mode of conducting the Quarterly Associations," which were agreed upon in 1790. The "Order and Form of Church Government, and, Rules of Discipline," which were first published in 1801, bear the impress of his mind, and being chairman of the Committee of Elders, or deacons appointed to meet at Bala to discuss finally the various particulars respecting the first ordination of ministers in the body, he must have had the chief share in drawing up the "Brief View," as it is called, "of the manner and order agreed upon, to ordain some of the preachers to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Connexion."

This first ordination took place at the Quarterly Association held at Bala, June 19 and 20, 1811.

In the year 1878, the Welsh people were somewhat startled by an announcement made by the Rev. W. Hughes, Vicar of Llanuwchllyn, near Bala, sixty-four years after Mr. Charles's death, that he had discovered the important fact, that Mr. Charles had avowed his deep-felt repentance of having ever taken part in the ordination of 1811. Hardly less than their surprise, was their grief to find a statement thus compromising the character of one whom they so universally revered, made upon such flimsy evidence. Dr. Edwards of Bala, Dr. Charles of Aberdovey, and Mr. R. O. Rees of Dolgelley, entered into a very lengthy and elaborate correspondence with him at the time, clearly showing that he must have been seriously misled in the charge he instituted. But it appears that the whole effect of their arguments upon his mind, was only a verification of the trite couplet :—

“Convince a man against his will,
And he is of the same opinion still.”

For in the year 1881, Mr. Hughes published a volume on the life of Mr. Charles,* in which he rearranges the facts and correspondence already published by Mr. Morgan of Syston (to which reference has been so often already made in this work), but whose grand design evidently is, the promulgation of the startling discovery of Mr. Charles's repentance. Mr. Morgan, be it observed, never mentioned anything to countenance the repentance theory. Mr. Hughes brings forward twelve points† from which he endeavours to substantiate his thesis; but it is the last two that he evidently deems the most important. The first ten are so simple, as hardly to need refutation. The answer to each is at once evident to everyone acquainted with the circumstances of the Calvinistic Methodist body at the time, and which have been briefly described in the preceding pages.‡ His last two points are. (1) That Professor Joseph Hughes, Rector of Cwmdu, Breconshire, and late Professor of Welsh at Lampeter College, heard Mr. Saunderson of Bala, who had married a sister of Mrs. Charles's, telling him in 1860, that Mr.

* The full title of the work is, “Life and Letters of the Rev. T. Charles, B.A., of Bala, edited by the Rev. W. Hughes, Vicar of Llanuwchllyn, near Bala, 1881.”

† pp. 312-325.

‡ See pp. 139-147.

Charles had told him shortly before his death that "the Methodists were grieving him, and if God should spare his life, he would go again to England, and would take a curacy in the Establishment." (2) That Mr. Charles's niece, that is, Mr. Saunderson's daughter, told Mr. Hughes that her father was present when Mr. Charles returned to the house, from the meeting in which it was determined to ordain the lay preachers, and that he exclaimed, with some excitement, "They have conquered me, they have conquered me."

These two points, if allowed to go unchallenged, conclusively prove Mr. Hughes's position, but from documents *written* by Mr. Saunderson, as well as others by Mr. Charles himself, it is almost certain that Professor Hughes was mistaken respecting the *time* to which Mr. Charles's perturbed feelings referred; that it was *before*, and not after the ordination. Further, if what Professor Hughes alleges Mr. Saunderson to have said, be correct as regards the time, then the latter's character for consistency is as much compromised as Mr. Charles's. Mr. Saunderson, being a zealous member of the Church of England had been asked by Bishop Short, of St. Asaph, to write him a *statement* of what he remembered respecting his old bosom friend, Mr. Charles, his views, and his connection with the Establishment. Mr. Saunderson's words respecting the Ordination are these:—

"When the innovation commenced among the Methodists, about three years before Mr. Charles's death, for the appointing of lay preachers to administer the sacraments, it was a source of great grief and sorrow to him, and he told the writer that it had cost him many a sleepless night. His health certainly was affected by it."

It is a well-known fact that the policy of the step proposed by the great proportion in the body, here called *innovators*, was a subject of great solicitude to Mr. Charles, as well as to all the episcopally-ordained ministers then surviving; for by this step would their secession from the Establishment be consummated, but which they still fondly hoped, by some overture * or other from the Bishops, might happily be averted. From the similarity of the words quoted by Professor Hughes to the above extract, it seems almost certain that they referred to this juncture. So long as there was hope, Mr. Charles objected, but once convinced that the step was inevitable, and also essential to the body as a separate denomination,

* See p. 144.

not only was he reconciled to the policy, but actually took part in the preliminary arrangements, as well as in the public performances. The episode described by Mr. Charles's niece, here also finds its intelligible place. The "overcoming" to which he referred on coming to the house, evidently means the strong arguments used by his brethren to bring him over to their views. Rather than there being any *repentance* manifested after the act; and especially near his end, as the interview with Professor Hughes would imply, Mr. Saunderson's description of his friend's death-bed scene, shuts out the possibility altogether. These are his words in the same *statement* to Bishop Short:—

"His end was most calm and resigned. The writer of this slept in the same room with him during the last week of his life. . . . The writer witnessed his last breath which was without the slightest emotion."

Another incident may here be mentioned which directly tends to discredit the words ascribed to Mr. Saunderson by Professor Hughes, or certainly to compromise the former's character for consistency. In about a year after Mr. Charles's death a memoir of him was published, written by the Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh. The words of this tribute respecting the ordination are:—

"In this matter Mr. Charles was endowed with much Christian sagacity and deliberation, and to the end of his life it is known to his nearest friends that his mind was calm and comfortable when looking back on the occasion." Now Mr. Saunderson could not have been ignorant of this statement, for the memoir was printed by Mr. Saunderson himself, in his press at Bala, and it is strange, if the words attributed to him by Professor Hughes be true, that he remained from 1815 to 1860 without controverting them, and when he did, that it was only in what appears to have been a casual conversation. So much in direct refutation of Mr. Hughes's points.

When we muster the positive evidence in favour of the accused, the proof of his consistency is overwhelming. A week before his death, Mr. Charles wrote a letter to his brethren, as they were assembled at the Association then held at Caernarvon. In this he says "that in the feeling of affectionate union with the preachers and elders there assembled he was very thankful to the Lord for being pleased to persuade his mind and cause his lot to fall amongst them, that he had enjoyed a happy communion with them for

twenty and nine years, that he supplicated the Lord to abide with them in abundant tokens of his grace and favour, and that he asked the aid of their prayers on his behalf, and also for his family in their sickness and distress." And perhaps the strongest proof of all is that Mr. Charles did *not* separate himself from his brethren. The same courage and decision of character which enabled him to cast his lot with them at first, would also have enabled him to withdraw from them, if to remain would have compromised his consistency. The whole purport of the author's argument seems to be the building up of a fond hope that the seceders will one day return to the bosom of the Establishment; in the words of an admired predictor—"that the bees would again return to the old hive." But the *nexus* of the argument is not very evident, for even if Charles had so far dissented from the course adopted in the ordination as to break his connection with the body altogether, that would not have stopped the chariot from going forward; and as has been well and truly said, "if that step (*i.e.* the ordination) had not been taken, the Church would not have been one whit stronger in Wales at the present day than it is. There is one dissenting denomination the more, and, as we believe, a greater number of religious people in consequence; but if that had not been, it is the other dissenting denominations, and not the Church, that would have been more numerous. The position of the Church has been made not by any steps which have been taken outside of it, but by the character of its own ministers." * We have somewhat diverted from the thread of our narrative in the above disquisition, but our apology is, that justice to the memory of a good and great man demanded a vindication of his character, on this the first opportunity after the charges have assumed a permanent form, in a language where both sides will appear to an equal advantage.

Before the digression, it will be remembered we were recounting Mr. Charles's activity on behalf of good causes both at home and abroad. The best of his thoughts and energies, however, were spent in establishing and sustaining his favourite institution.

The following extracts having exclusive reference to Mr. C.'s labours with the Sunday Schools, show how unflagging his zeal was, and how indefatigable his efforts on their behalf, to the very end of his life:—

* "Welsh Methodism," p. 190.

“Bala, Nov. 27, 1808. Though my journey to — in September last was attended with consequences very painful to me in my late illness, yet the effect of that meeting, and of public catechising of the children in the open streets, before the largest inn in the town, have proved most beneficial indeed to that place. . . .

“Last Sunday evening we had an association of children at Bala. To attend it was the first thing I did after my illness. Our large chapel overflowed; and the effects of the work of that day are very evident both in town and neighbourhood.”

Writing to the secretary of the Tract Society about this time, he says, “It has been my delightful work since I left London in December last to catechise publicly every Sunday, and to hear them repeating chapters before thousands of people; besides preaching generally twice every Sabbath, and sometimes thrice in different places. . . . The Sunday Schools and the public examination of them, have undoubtedly done wonders in Wales; and have succeeded in some places in moralizing the people when all other means had failed.” After mentioning the case of one town in which the custom of gathering people together to drink and to dance was thus put down, he says that the following day “the harper was met going home by a person on the road. Surprised to see him leaving the place so soon he asked him the reason; ‘Some parson,’ said he, ‘with a black cap on (Mr. C. wore a black cap), has been catechising there and persuaded the young people not to attend the feast.’ Poor fellow he went home quite disappointed. The parson with the black cap deprived him of the hire of his iniquity.”

Speaking of his work in 1806, he says, “In Liverpool, Manchester, and Chester, I catechised hundreds of children before the congregations when fullest. The prospect was delightful.”

In a letter dated Bala, 1807, he writes, “Here with us all over the country, the schools prosper more than ever. Every Sunday since I left London, I have catechised hundreds of children before thousands of people, once, or twice, or three times, besides preaching. Young people, yea, grown up people, now generally learn out the principles of religion and chapters in the Bible, and stand up with the children publicly to repeat them. Last Sunday I travelled eighteen miles; preached three times, gave the sacrament as often, and catechised twice. I do not say this by way of boasting, but that you may form some idea of the prosperity of the work. In

some districts all in a mass are engaged in learning the Scriptures, and appear publicly to repeat them; and those public repetitions leave a wonderful effect on all that hear. It is no uncommon thing with us for whole families, master, mistress, children, and servants, to learn the catechisms and chapters, and to come and repeat them together. I never expected nor could hope in any degree that I should ever see what I now see. Through mercy my health and strength continue firm in these incessant labours to which I am continually called. It is a delightful labour, indeed! Many of my brethren are most heartily engaged in the same blessed work."

Writing to a friend in London, Sept. 16, 1813, he states, "I am happy to inform you that the work prospers in some parts of our country. The Sunday Schools are, indeed, everywhere prosperous. One of our teachers here told me last Sunday, that our chapel, which holds three thousand people, would soon be too small to seat all the adults and the children, which increasingly crowd the school every Sunday. The sight was delightful, and such as I never expected to see. Oh, for a Divine afflatus to waft them all to heaven! I have received a letter giving a pleasing account of the progress of religion in some parts of the county of Caernarvon. The Sunday Schools abound with scholars, and the teachers are diligent and faithful.—Let us praise the Lord."

The next extracts bring us within twelve or thirteen months of his death, and they all testify to the most intense concern for the welfare of the schools. Writing on the 27th Sept., 1813, to a lady named M. H—— at Liverpool he says, "Through mercy I am much better. My frequent pains have left me; and my strength is so far improved that I was enabled to preach three times last Sunday and catechise three times. These extra exertions I mean in future to avoid as much as possible; for I have every reason to believe that they have in a degree been the means of bringing on my present complaint, the effects of which I still feel. I very much approve of your labour with the children of your school in improving them by catechetical and more personally religious instructions. . . . I am happy to inform you that the prospect in our poor country is in many parts encouraging. About three hundred have been in less than a twelvemonth received into different societies in Caernarvonshire, *principally from the Sunday Schools*, which increase exceedingly both in number and in the progress they make in learning.

Adults as well as children everywhere crowd into them; and their attention is great; and their appearance sober and pleasing; and some join our churches continually. We have on the whole great cause for thankfulness, and hope to see still greater things."

Writing to the same lady later in that year he says, "In a religious and moral point of view, the state of our peasantry is gradually and continually improving. Fresh advances are made every year. Hundreds of children and young people have this year joined our different societies. On Sept. 27, the children and young people of a whole district were publicly examined by me in our chapel. I never witnessed so affecting a scene. They could hardly make their responses, being so overcome with weeping; and the whole congregation was similarly affected."

In a letter written to a Mrs. A—— of London, June 24th, 1814, within about three months of his death, he is full of enthusiasm in behalf of every good cause, and especially the schools: "I comfort myself much," says he, "with the thought of Mr. A——'s care and activity about the juvenile and adult schools. We had, last week, our great annual meeting here (association). The congregation, though always large, was more numerous by *some thousands* than we have ever witnessed before. . . . Great additions have been made in general to our churches last year, about two thousand in all. The Bible societies, the schools, and every good work set on foot, succeed among us; and we hope the kingdom of the little stone will soon fill the land. May thy kingdom come speedily, O Lord."*

Some three years before his death he had felt the seeds of that disease germinating within his constitution, which ultimately proved fatal to him. Travelling by himself somewhere in Montgomeryshire, on horseback, and having come to a gate, by too great an effort to open it, he felt a sudden pain in his inside; which turned out to be the commencement of a rupture. The pain which he then felt, with the lapse of time, increased in severity, and he neglecting to seek the proper remedy, it began to produce a serious effect on his constitution. By the year 1813, many of his friends were observing, to their great grief, that his strength was wasting, and his voice greatly weakened, though he persevered in his travels and labours nearly as much as before. In June of that year, he

* Morgan's "Life of Charles," *passim*.

travelled with somewhat rapid strides, preaching on the way and resting but little the whole time, from Bala to Holyhead, where an Association of the Methodists was being held; from thence in haste, delivering a few sermons *en route*, he returned by way of Llanidloes, where a meeting had been arranged to establish an auxiliary branch of the Bible Society. This over-exertion crippled his powers very much for the remainder of that year. In the spring of 1814, he attempted to renew his itineracies but with manifest disadvantage; and in the month of August he and his wife, who also at this time was a great invalid, visited Barmouth, to see if the change for sea air, would have some effect in reviving their drooping spirits and weakened energies. While here, he remarked to his wife, when talking over his infirmity with a cheerful tone, "Well, dear Sarah, the fifteen years are nearly completed." Having remained there for about a fortnight, they called on their return home with their relations at Machynlleth, and it was here, on the 4th of September, that he preached his last sermons—in the morning from Luke xv. 7, and in the evening from 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

The following week, he felt himself getting worse, and longed very much to return to Bala, which place he reached on Saturday afternoon, the 10th of September, in a state of weakness and prostration which caused the greatest solicitude to his relations and friends. To one who helped him to the house and his room, he remarked, "I feel very thankful to the Lord for thus enabling me once more to come home," and soon after added, "Now I have nothing more to do, but to die." Some days after, he repeated the words from 2 Kings xiii. 14, as producing a great impression upon his mind, "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died," adding, "I do not know what the Lord's intention is concerning me, but I am in his hands, let Him do with me as it seemeth good to Him. I have given myself to Him a thousand times."

During his last days, it pleased the Lord to try him through many family afflictions. Besides his own and his dear wife's illness, a much-respected domestic servant was taken away by a severe fever, after only three days' illness, and his eldest son was also suffering from a very dangerous ailment. With reference to all these afflictions he used to say, "The Lord has his rod on the family, but it is in the hand of a tender father." To a friend who

had come to see him, he remarked, "You see that we are in the furnace, but after we have suffered awhile, we shall be brought out thoroughly sifted and purified." He was accustomed often to repeat the words, "Charles is only a poor sinner—only a poor sinner—I know that I cannot be saved without forgiveness; but there is forgiveness with the Lord." When it was told him that his son was beginning to recover, he exclaimed with peculiar emphasis, "The Lord is very good, his mercy endureth for ever," reiterating several times "for his mercy endureth for ever." Then he asked his attendant to go to his library and get him a Hebrew copy of the book of Psalms. Turning to Psalm cxxxvi, he seemed to derive much consolation from the Hebrew word *chesed*, which is there translated, "mercy," remarking that it was a word of very wide import and great comfort.

Monday morning, the 3rd October, feeling himself better, he took a walk in his garden, which gave his friends some hope for his recovery. This, however, was but of short duration, for he got worse in the evening, and spent the whole night in very great pain. Notwithstanding all, his mind was calm, and he was greatly sustained by the comfort of the Scriptures. Amongst many of his sayings at this time the following illustrate the calmness of his mind. "I have arranged the few earthly things which I had, and have committed my soul to the Lord. 'I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.'" He also told a friend that his bodily pains had been great, "but when I think" he added, "of my sinfulness, what I suffer is as nothing." About six o'clock on Tuesday morning, after waking from a short slumber, he said, "I have been thinking whereabouts heaven is, and how I could find it, but I thought after, that the Lord would send some kind angel to show me the way." When a friend remarked to him the great loss which the Church and all the country would sustain in his departure, he answered, "Be calm in the Lord; he is able to raise hundreds of servants abler and more successful than I ever have been." About midday on Tuesday, he got up, but was very weak, and all he said betokened that his mind was ripening for the society of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect. Attempting to walk across the room, he said, "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion

for ever." And very often with much impressiveness did he soliloquize, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." To one who was placing a pillow under his head he remarked, "I am very thankful for all the trouble you have taken with me, and though I shall not have it in my power to repay you for all your kindness, yet this I leave with you, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'" On retiring to rest for the night he thus addressed his wife,—“Well, my dear, if I die and leave you, the Lord still lives to take care of you; he cannot die.” He also expressed a desire to spend the night without pain, and in this the Lord granted him his wish, though he slept but little. About five o'clock in the morning, he complained that he was cold, and shivers came over him which continued for about an hour. After this he had a respite for some time, but he remained quite silent. Then a friend came to his bedside, and said to him, “Well, Mr. Charles, the day of tribulation is come,” to which he readily replied in the remainder of the passage, “there is a refuge.” These were about the last words he uttered, and his spirit soon after soared away through that space along which he had a few days before felt sure he should have a guide. This was on Wednesday morning, October 5, 1814, when six days short of completing the 59th year of his age.

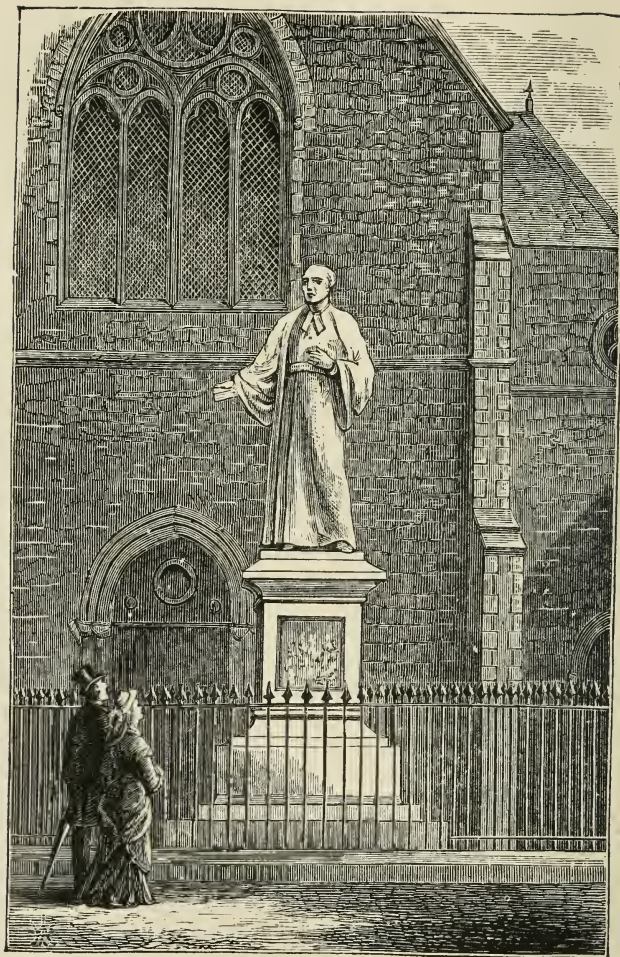
On the Friday evening following, a large congregation of every rank from Bala and the neighbourhood, and many from a distance came together to show their last token of respect to the memory of this faithful servant of Christ. Before starting from the house, the Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh preached an earnest and impressive sermon from Heb. xi. 4, “And by it, he being dead, yet speaketh.” When dwelling on the fruits of faith as exemplified in his laborious and productive life, both preacher and hearers were affected unto tears. All the way to the small church at Llanycil, about a mile from the town, on the Dolgelley road, appropriate hymns were sung. So large was the concourse that hundreds were obliged to remain in the graveyard while the burial service was being read in the church, after finishing which an anthem was sung, founded on Psalm xxxix. A hymn having again been sung at the graveside, his body was left in its quiet resting-place to await the general awaking at the sound of the archangel's last trump.

A monument to his memory in front of the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel at Bala, was unveiled on the 17th June, 1875. It consists of a statue representing Mr. Charles dressed in the Geneva preaching gown, with one hand on his heart, and with the other offering a Bible, as if giving expression to the words, "O'm calon rwy'n dymuno—'Bibl i bawb o bobl y byd.'" ("From my heart I wish—'A Bible to every one of the people of the world.'") The statue is of marble, seven feet high, with a marble pedestal eight feet high, and a bas-relief representing Mr. Charles teaching a class, with the inscription, THOMAS CHARLES, born 1755, died 1814, erected 1875. It was designed and executed by Mr. William Davies (Mynorydd), Euston Road, London.

The whole cost was about £650, and the expenses borne by public subscriptions, chiefly from the denomination to which he belonged. The following list shows how general the feeling was, thus to honour his memory :—

	£	s.	d.
From the counties of North Wales, including the Presbyteries,			
Liverpool and Manchester	368	17	3
„ the counties of South Wales, the Home Mission district,			
and London	148	7	10
„ the children of North and South Wales	82	0	6
„ the Welsh in Australia	32	4	0
„ „ Cincinnati	7	17	8
„ individual subscriptions	10	5	0
Total	£649	12	3

The ceremony of unveiling was performed at the public meeting convened for the purpose in connection with the Quarterly Association which was being held at Bala at the time, and as usual, attended by thousands from all parts of the country. The chair was taken by John Roberts, Esq., J.P. (afterwards M.P. for the Flint boroughs, and chief promoter of the Act of Parliament for the Sunday Closing of Public-houses in Wales, which, passed in 1881, was first enforced in 1882), who first of all spoke words to the following effect in Welsh: He considered it a great privilege to be called upon to take part in the proceedings. He never felt a greater desire to be able to speak well in the old language, than on that day. He said they had met as a nation, and not as a denomination. In a certain sense, Mr. Charles needed no monument, because his name was connected, in the mind of every Welshman,



CHARLES'S MONUMENT.

with every Bible and Testament circulated by the Bible Society, amongst all the nations of the world; and his memory tied to the Sunday School which he was the chief instrument in planting in Wales. After committing the keeping of the monument to the charge of the townsmen of Bala, he called upon Mrs. Edwards, the wife of Rev. Lewis Edwards, D.D., Principal of the Calvinistic Methodist College in the place, and grand-daughter of Mr. Charles, to unveil the statue. Then Dr. Edwards was called upon to address the audience, who said that he would not have thought it proper for him to address them on the occasion, but for the reason that Mr. Charles's grand-daughter was not accustomed to public speaking. He wished to speak a word for her. Then he proceeded to state that he was glad to announce that several clergymen from England were present on the platform, having come to Bala on the sole purpose to witness the ceremony; that the Congregationalists were represented by Rev. John Peters (Ioan Pedr), that two district secretaries of the Bible Society—Revs. C. Jackson, M.A., and W. D. Lewis, M.A.,—had been deputed by the committee to represent the society; and that he had great pleasure in reading to the meeting a letter from Earl Shaftesbury, the president, expressing his warm sympathy with the proceedings, but who was unable personally to attend:—

“June 3rd, 1875.

“DEAR SIR,—Had early notice been given me, I should in all probability have been able to find a day for a journey into Wales, and a share in the ceremony to do honour to the memory of the Rev. Mr. Charles of Bala. But the 17th of this month is an impossible day for me, and I can only express a deep regret that it is not in my power to be present at your gathering, and there say what I think and feel on the just and becoming tribute. My Welsh-speaking accomplishments were never great, tho' I studied the language a little. But I hope you will give my best and hearty love to the Sunday-School children of the Principality, and say to them for me, in their own tongue, ‘Y gwir yu erbyn y Byd’ (The Truth against the World). Urge them to hold fast for ever to our Blessed Lord, and we shall have no fear. It is a noble sum for the children to have collected, and may God Almighty be ever with them.

“Your obedient Servant,

“SHAFTESBURY.”

“Rev. Dr. Edwards.”

Rev. David Charles, D.D., grandson of Mr. Charles and brother to Mrs. Edwards, next addressed the assembly, who said that it was natural for him to feel interested in the present occasion. He looked upon it as a great privilege and honour to stand before them as the grandson and representative of the man whom they wished that day to honour. He could not say that he remembered his grandfather, as he was but some two years and a quarter old when his grandfather died. He remembered, however, one circumstance in his life connected with him, although he was at the time but a child. The first thing of all, in fact, he remembered, was his going, on the day of his death, into his study, to call him to his breakfast, as his custom was. He shouted "grandpa, come to your breakfast." But his uncle, Mr. Charles of Caermarthen, came to meet him, weeping. That was the first incident he remembered in this world. He also remembered the day of his funeral, when Rev. Thomas Jones of Denbigh preached from the window and a great congregation listening to him. He should have been glad if he had received a little of his friendship when young, and if he had enjoyed his counsels and instructions. But his bright example had been ever before his eyes. As his grandson, and bearing his name, he felt a great responsibility lay upon him lest he should do anything to dishonour that name. On three occasions during his lifetime he had felt a just pride that he was at all connected with him. One was, when he stood on the platform of the Bible Society, at the time of its jubilee, at Exeter Hall. He felt that he stood there as his representative. His grandfather was the chief instrument in starting that glorious institution whose object was to fill the world with Bibles. Another occasion was when he first met Samuel Morley, Esq., with the late Rev. John Phillips, at Tenby. Mr. Morley addressed him as they were parting; "May I ask you, are you a relative of Thomas Charles of Bala?" "I am his grandson," was the reply. "Ah," said he, "an honourable name, known to all the world, and which will be remembered to the end of time." The third occasion is the present. He wished to thank the Calvinistic Methodists especially, and all others who had a share in accomplishing this object.

The chairman here said, they would change the language but not the subject. It was proper that they should not confine themselves to the Welsh language in this meeting, as those who

sympathized with Mr. Charles were not confined to any country, party, or age. There had been many movements which, though good in themselves, were temporary as regards their duration or limited as regards their object, but those with which Mr. Charles's name was connected, were not only general in their application for a time, but continued as important and practical in this age as they were when started by him three-fourths of a century ago. His great ideas were, the Bible for every man, and religious instruction within the reach of all. The means he conceived for realizing these two ideas were, the Bible Society and Sunday Schools; and if Mr. Charles was living now there would have been no need for him either to change his doctrine or his practice. He could have said now, in the face of the powers which they, as evangelical Christians, had to combat and the perils they were open to, that he had no other, nor did he desire better, weapons, than an open Bible in the hand of every one, and pious and earnest men in our Sunday Schools bringing its truths home to the hearts of the people. Whatever advantages the Welsh possessed, and whatever excellences they might boast of, must be attributed to the influence of the Bible and the Sunday Schools. They had just now unveiled the statue erected to the memory of Mr. Charles. What lessons could they learn from this occasion? What he himself wished to learn, and also to impress on them all, was, to endeavour, in the spirit of prayer, to follow the example of the great and good man whose memory they were honouring. Perhaps it should not fall to their lot—it was very likely it would not—to initiate some great undertakings and thereby gain for themselves a name, so as to have monuments to perpetuate their memory. But let them bear in mind that those who laboured to carry out important discoveries to practical issues acted as useful, though not so prominent a part, as those who discovered them. He referred to scientific discoveries, the power of electricity, steam, etc. Those who, at one time and another, found out some new means of applying them continually added to the value of those discoveries. So let them, by efforts to extend the influence of God's Word, by applying the mechanism of the Sunday School to new and beneficial objects, exert themselves, and thus they would turn to additional productive uses those measures started by Mr. Charles so many years ago.

The Rev. C. Jackson, M.A., comprised his address under the

following heads : (1) the importance of carrying out the convictions of our own minds for good ; (2) the power of combination ; (3) the blessings of Christian liberality.

The Rev. W. Dickens Lewis, B.A., reviewed the state of Wales before the rise of Sunday Schools, and the labours of Walter Cradoc, Vavasor Powell, Griffith Jones, Howell Harris, and Rowlands, as preparatory to the more permanent work instituted by Charles. He compared Charles to a certain parent bird, which not only gathered its young to the nest to protect them from the attacks of a serpent, but also covered the nest with a leaf, the taste of which was fatal to the serpent. So Mr. Charles had gathered the young people of Wales into the nest of the Sunday Schools, and had supplied them also with the leaves of the tree of life as an antidote to the attacks of the great enemy of souls. He hoped they would continue to show their respect for Mr. Charles by making the schools more efficient than ever, and that chiefly by endeavouring to make them a means of salvation for their members. And further, he urged them to maintain their honourable position as the most liberal contributors towards the Bible Society.

The Rev. Thomas Levi, who, by means of the *Trysorfa y plant*, a periodical of which he was the editor, had been instrumental in collecting so large a sum towards the statue from the children, next spoke. He said that Mr. Charles was a man intended for work. He felt like his Lord, "I must work." The ecclesiastical rules which he was under, gave restrictions to this feeling. "I will work," said Charles. "You shall not," said the Church. "Don't work," said she. "Yes, I must work," said he. "If I am not permitted to work within thee, I must go somewhere where I am allowed to work." When thirty years of age he joined the Methodists, and there he found not only a field of labour, but every sympathy and co-operation. Mr. Charles had an eye to discern the work needful to be done. Everything which Mr. Charles undertook has lived. There is an ancient tradition about the Lord Jesus, that He, in conjunction with other boys, was in the habit of making images of birds, in clay. But with this difference, that His birds became alive, and instantly began to fly. Just the same with Mr. Charles, everything he did became alive and increased. One of the first acts of his planting, was to plant religion in his family. He was the religious father of his family. He was the

father of his father. When a little child he came under the discipline of Rees Hugh, and very soon we find him like a little priest in his family, and everybody paying deference to him. What he did to his family, he did also to his nation to a great degree. No one knows the amount of his labour, his application, and self-denial with the circulating schools which he established to teach the people to read. The Sabbath Schools of Wales were not the same kind of plant as the Sunday Schools in England. Raikes's object was to teach poor little children to read. The conditions of admission were, clean faces, clean hands, and properly-combed hair. But the object of the Sabbath Schools in Wales was to teach everybody to read, and not only to read, but to understand, yea to believe and love the Bible. Then he referred to Mr. Charles's connection with the Bible Society. It might be considered strange that a Welshman was the father of that Society, but such was the fact. He hoped that the sight of this monument would be a direct help to remember his noble character, and to kindle in all kindred spirit and zeal.

After being addressed further by Rev. J. Peters, of the Congregational College at Bala, who made apposite remarks on Mr. Charles as a Christian scholar, and by Rev. M. Colley, of Shrewsbury, on whose head, when a boy, Mr. Charles had laid his hands, the meeting was terminated with the benediction by Rev. C. Jackson. An adjourned meeting was also held on the green, to hear addresses by several gentlemen on the Sunday Schools.

Further supplementing the above eulogiums, we cannot, perhaps, more appropriately bring this chapter to a close than by quoting the estimate of his life and character, by one who in the study of the theme with which his name has since been connected, must have associated much with his spirit and genius, and who, from both his surroundings and general ability, is allowed by all to have been a broad, just, and impartial critic. We refer to Judge Johnes, who sums up the character and doings of Charles in the following words:—"Though Methodism was at first extremely unpopular in North Wales, towards the end of the last century, a missionary sprung up, who was destined to carry it into the wildest recesses of Snowdon. This was the Rev. Thomas Charles; he was a native of Caermarthenshire, but had served a curacy in North Wales. Hereafter, few names will excite such mingled emotions of pride

and regret in the hearts of his countrymen. To him we owe much of the very civilization of our land. It was he who, in exchange for the Popish ignorance of the last century, diffused among the North Wales peasantry those deep, moral, and religious feelings, and that thirst for information, which at present characterize them. Nor was his influence confined to his own country; he was the founder of institutions which extend over the whole Christian world. The Bible Society commenced with him, and two of his countrymen; and, according to Dr. Pole, he is to be considered as the originator of the 'Adult Schools.'

"With such a leader, we need not be surprised that the progress of Methodism in North Wales, was one of the most rapid of religious changes. When he first joined them, they were a small and persecuted body; at his death, their chapels were to be found in almost every parish in that division of the Principality. . . . Of Thomas Charles of Bala, in his life, different opinions were held, according as men dreaded the evils of schism on one hand, or felt scandalized at the apathy of the Church on the other. Thus, while some looked upon him as guilty of the sin of Jeroboam, others revered him as the good Samaritan, who gave the word of life to his countrymen; while their clergy, like the Jewish priest of old, passed haughtily by on the other side. Yet, amongst those who knew him best, there was but one impression as to the goodness of his general intentions; and perhaps, as men feel more warmly towards Wales, they will think less of his faults, and more of his temptations. Seldom has any country given birth to a man who so eminently combined the talents that guide and enlighten, with a guilelessness and a childlike sensibility that seem hardly of this world." *

* Johnes's "Essay," pp. 44-49, *passim*.



RAIKES'S STATUE ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT

CHAPTER XV.

A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES.

The general importance of statistics in gauging the efficiency of any widely-extended organization—Charges of recent degeneracy of Welsh Sunday Schools as regards quality and popularity—The bearing of statistics on the question—Tables of numbers at different epochs up to 1881—Explanations and general summary—Accuracy confirmed by reference to individual cases—Relation of the schools to the teaching of the Welsh language—Interest in the institution reviving—Altered circumstances of the present time with regard to the teaching of religious truths generally—The aid in the work from day schools almost entirely lost—The spirit of the age decidedly in favour of separating religious teaching from State control—This shown by recent legislation—The report of the Commissioners of 1881 on the subject—The spread of secular knowledge no safeguard of morality—Spiritual regeneration the only true foundation of morality—Biblical and religious instruction the only medium of this regeneration—Whose mission is it to supply this instruction?—Is the Sunday School sufficient to meet the need arising from the altered condition of the country?

THE present is an age of statistics. The various topics upon which they are brought to bear, and which they are made subservient to elucidate, would seem almost to baffle enumeration. It was only in the beginning of the present century—in the year 1801—that the first census of the population was made by the Government of this country, which is no doubt the most natural as well as one of the most essential subjects of inquiry for a Government to make; but since then, this department of political science has extended the area of its investigations into so many ramifications, that there is now hardly a question but is referred to the test of statistics. Figures are now marshalled or manipulated to illustrate such wide-

reaching questions as the former condition of the State, the present revenue of the country, the extent of its trade, commerce, and navigation, and even the changes in the moral, social, and physical condition of the people. No labour or expense is spared by the government of this and many other countries to make their statistical investigations as thorough and accurate as possible. For upon the facts brought to light by them, reasonings of the highest import are based, and conclusions of the most vital consequences deduced, both by the statesman and political economist. In fact, no statement which can be tested by statistics is accepted as trustworthy, if unsupported by them; and an array of figures duly authenticated is enough to discredit any theory, however plausible, with which they are inexorably at variance.

Information in matters affecting the condition and interests of the people is very important to the Government. And as no legislation is ordinarily undertaken without being based upon a clear estimate of the statistics of points at issue, the Government makes ample use of its great power and authority, to demand information from the subjects, as well as of the vast means at its disposal for collecting all necessary facts. No private person or corporate body can compete with a Government in the extent, variety, thoroughness, or accuracy of its statistics; still, tangible and reliable results, within their respective spheres, have been obtained by various associations, elaborate and trustworthy figures being supplied by the voluntary service of their members. The incontrovertible character of these special statistics have been as useful in dispelling illusions with regard to the subjects with which they dealt, as those collected under the auspices of a powerful state machinery. It is curious to think how effectual the publication of the result of the first census in England was, in quelling the croakings of certain pessimists at the time. These were continually bewailing the retrograde motion of the country, urging that England was becoming less populous from year to year. The result of the census was, however, to prove that the country had actually increased by two millions and a quarter between 1750 and the end of the century. In like manner, the result of statistics collected by many a private association or religious denomination has remanded many a debatable topic from the sphere of the imagination, at once to that of plain and unvarnished fact.

This has been notably the case in connection with the Sunday Schools of Wales. From the beginning, it may be observed that one special feature in their organization was to keep a record, by means of figures, of the amount of work done from time to time, and to register the number in actual attendance and on the books. The denomination to which each school belongs carefully collects the aggregate of these items, which are regularly published in their respective year-books, so that it is no difficult matter to bring any gratuitous assertion respecting their present state and condition to be tested by the cold logic of facts and figures. Many of these statements are made from no hostile feeling to the establishment, but rather from a fear lest the charges adduced should be too true, and with an anxious wish that the defects surmised should be speedily remedied. Still it must be granted that facts are always preferable to surmises, and it is to be regretted that any author should generalize from insufficient data, or attach to isolated hearsay evidence an importance almost oracular. The latest example within our knowledge of this class of utterances, is what transpired at the Cymmrodorian section of the National Eisteddfod, held at Merthyr, August, 1881. Coming in the very same year as the general census of the population and on the eve of our centenary, some of the assertions then made naturally challenge a friendly criticism. Mr. T. M. Williams, B.A., inspector under the London School Board, in a very able paper, reviewing the report of the Departmental Committee on the state of Higher and Intermediate Education in Wales, then very recently published, incidentally referred to what he conceived to be the state of the Sunday Schools of the Principality. A perusal of the following pages will, we hope, thoroughly convince the reader that the picture he drew, from no hostile motive, is not a fair representation of facts. While deprecating the discouragement given by the recent course of events to religious or Biblical teaching in state-aided schools, he added, "that it was the firm conviction of educated and observant Welshmen residing in the Principality that the Welsh Sunday Schools were rapidly deteriorating in quality, were degenerating into secular organizations, and were gradually losing their hold upon the Welsh people; that Welsh parents have latterly become unmindful of the religious teaching of their children." In reply to some criticisms on his paper, he further explained "that he had as

his authority, men who were teachers in Welsh Sunday Schools in North Wales, 'that their experience of Welsh Sunday Schools was such as had driven them to the conclusion that the children of our Welsh Sunday Schools were not now grounded in a knowledge of the Bible and of God's law, as they were in days gone by.' The objection which he saw to the plan now adopted in Sunday School teaching in some districts, was a tendency to drift into a system like that of the English Sunday Schools, by which it would become something like a secular organization. The debate being continued, it was further brought forward as a charge against the Welsh Sunday Schools that a great deal of time was expended upon instruction in the mother tongue of the people."

Now these are grave and sweeping charges brought against a venerable and time-honoured institution. They deserve the greater consideration because uttered by men qualified to speak upon the subject, and whose language plainly proves their keen appreciation of what the schools have produced in the past, and what they are capable of producing in the future. The most unfortunate feature in the denunciation is the total absence of appeal to facts which, with some trouble, might have been quoted, if existing; and also the very unsatisfactory nature of the little evidence adduced, both as regards quantity and quality. Happily for the interests of truth, the most important perhaps of the series of indictments, viz. "that the schools were gradually losing their hold upon the Welsh people," can at once be referred to the test of figures. If unsupported by this impartial witness, and surely if flatly contradicted, then it ought to be conceded as a natural and fair inference, that it is not a likely occurrence to see an institution which is flourishing in the number of its adherents, degenerating in quality.

But independent of the connection between number and quality, the general import of our remarks in the preceding chapters, with reference to school associations, public catechizing, new phases of oral and written examinations, and other adaptation of means to present wants and peculiarities, tended directly to disprove each of the above indictments, especially a deterioration of quality. At the very time these charges are made, we can refer to reports continually being published, in the recognized organs of the institutions, of unusual efforts put forth in several localities to learn the

Scriptures and the various theological formularies of the different denominations by heart, besides other signs of an undying vitality. It is quite unfair to infer, because a few isolated districts should show signs of languor and decay, that the whole country is in a similar state of apathy and retrogression. Why, in the published records of the institution, we find that similar rumours and apprehensions were rife at almost every epoch of its history. While certainly it is to be deplored that these fancies should be uttered in the form of incontrovertible matters of fact, still as cries of warning or incentives to renewed zeal and watchfulness, they cannot be looked upon as unmitigated evils.

We shall here present some of the most important statistics bearing upon the Sunday Schools of Wales, up to the year of the last census, in 1881. They may be useful data of information in more numerous connection than we have occasion to refer to. Some of the tables will require a word of explanation, which will be appended to each, reserving until the end the special points which elucidate the subject of the present chapter.

The only available materials for estimating the extent of the means of instruction afforded to the people of England and Wales, in all schools, whether connected with the National Society or otherwise, in the early part of the century, are the returns obtained by a committee of the House of Commons in 1818; and the *Summary of Education Returns*, published in 1833, known as Lord Kerry's Returns, which exhibit the following results:—

Day Schools, 1818.

England, excluding Monmouthshire—			
Endowed	164,935		
Unendowed	475,719		
	<hr/>		640,654
Wales, including Monmouthshire—			
Endowed	8,123		
Unendowed	26,106		
	<hr/>		34,229

Sunday Schools, 1818.

England, excluding Monmouthshire	452,394
Wales, including Monmouthshire	24,831
	<hr/>
	477,225

Day Schools, 1833.

England, excluding Monmouthshire—			
Scholars receiving daily instruction	.	.	1,128,521
Infant Schools	.	.	86,971
Wales, including Monmouthshire			
Infant Schools	.	.	59,421
			2,034
			<hr/>
			1,276,947

Sunday Schools—

England, excluding Monmouthshire			
Wales, including Monmouthshire	.	.	1,363,174
			185,716
			<hr/>
			1,548,890

The proportion of the Sunday scholars receiving instruction in day schools is not indicated, either in the returns of 1818, or in the *Summary* published in 1833; and thus the total number of persons receiving instruction in both day and Sunday Schools cannot be stated. The returns of 1818 do not indicate the number of schools established by Dissenters, but in the *Summary* for 1833 they are thus distinguished:—

	Infant and daily scholars.		Sunday scholars.
England, excluding Monmouthshire	48,335	...	609,374
Wales, including Monmouthshire	3,487	...	140,733

It would thus seem, that although only one in twenty-five in England, and one in seventeen in Wales, of the children under daily instruction in 1833, were taught in Dissenting Schools; yet nearly one-half in England, and three-fourths in Wales, of all persons who then received instruction in Sunday Schools, attended Dissenting Schools. It is evident further, from the above tables, that a far greater proportion of the children attended Sunday Schools in Wales than in England. It is further deduced that if the whole number attending Sunday Schools in Wales in 1833 was 185,716, of which 140,733 belonged to Dissenters, then the number of Church of England Sunday scholars for that year was 44,983. In the following tables, which have been prepared from returns obtained by the National Society and comprised in their published reports, we shall confine our attention exclusively to the Sunday scholars, the numbers always comprising both the day scholars who attend Sunday Schools and those who attend on Sundays only.

Table showing the increase in Church Sunday School education between 1826 and 1846 :—

	1826.	1831.	1837.	1846.
Diocese of Llandaff—				
Monmouth County	} 2,793 {	3,111	3,963	9,366
Glamorgan		4,030	4,565	6,985
St. David's—				
Brecon	} 8,431 {	1,435	1,709	3,058
Cardigan		3,831	2,848	4,396
Caermarthen		5,018	3,401	5,332
Pembroke		3,620	2,648	5,370
Radnor		600	704	1,479
Bangor—				
Anglesea	} 2,248 {	2,239	2,167	2,485
Caernarvon		1,929	2,953	5,973
Merioneth		1,129	1,054	2,176
St. Asaph—				
Denbigh	} 3,700 {	2,894	3,382	5,726
Flint		2,963	3,729	7,190
Montgomery		2,125	2,980	4,255
Total	17,172	34,924	36,103	63,791

From the foregoing table the following summary can be made, showing the progress of Church Sunday-School education in Wales in twenty years, namely, from 1826 to 1846 :—

Llandaff	2,793 scholars to	16,351
St. David's	8,431 ,,	19,635
Bangor	2,248 ,,	10,634
St. Asaph	3,700 ,,	17,171
	<u>17,172</u> ,,	<u>63,791</u>

Table showing the percentage of scholars to population in Church Sunday Schools in Wales for the year 1846 :—

	Population in 1841.	Sunday scholars.	Gratuitous teachers.	Percentage to population.
Diocese of Llandaff—				
Monmouth	134,355	9,366	359	6·97
Glamorgan	171,188	6,985	200	4·07
Diocese of St. David's—				
Brecon	55,603	3,058	153	5·50
Carried forward	361,146	19,409	712	

	Population in 1841.	Sunday scholars.	Gratuitous teachers.	Percentage to population.
Brought forward	361,146	19,409	712	
Cardigan	68,766	4,396	251	6.39
Caermarthen	106,326	5,332	245	5.02
Pembroke	88,044	5,370	128	6.10
Radnor	25,356	1,479	26	5.83
Diocese of Bangor—				
Anglesea	50,891	2,485	46	4.88
Caernarvon	81,093	5,973	173	7.37
Merioneth	39,332	2,176	52	5.53
Diocese of St. Asaph—				
Denbigh	88,866	5,726	221	6.44
Flint	66,919	7,190	272	10.74
Montgomery	69,219	4,255	155	6.29
Total	1,045,958	63,791	2281	6.01

Tables appended to the Commissioners' Reports stating the number of Sunday scholars receiving instruction in Dissenting Chapels, in 1846, as follows:—

Diocese of Llandaff—

Monmouth	14,337	
Add for portion of county excluded	4,000	
	<hr/>	18,337
Glamorgan		27,605
		<hr/>
		45,942

Diocese of St. David's—

Brecon	11,245	
Cardigan	23,057	
Caermarthen	24,476	
Pembroke	14,163	
Radnor	1,163	
	<hr/>	74,104

Diocese of Bangor—

Anglesea	13,998	
Caernarvon	25,308	
Merioneth	16,075	
	<hr/>	55,381

Diocese of St. Asaph—

Denbigh	20,661	
Flint	11,499	
Montgomery	16,822	
	<hr/>	48,982

The following table shows how these were distributed between the various denominations:—

COUNTIES.	NUMBER OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.			
	Baptist.	Inde- pendent.	Calvinistic Methodist.	Wesleyan Methodist.
South Wales—				
Monmouthshire . .	4,396	3,745	2,292	3,304
Glamorganshire . .	5,610	10,188	8,626	1,709
	10,006	13,933	10,918	5,013
Breconshire . . .	2,132	4,080	3,742	523
Cardiganshire . . .	2,025	5,483	13,776	1,773
Caermarthenshire . .	4,006	11,962	7,411	983
Pembrokeshire . . .	4,570	5,241	3,008	1,344
Radnorshire . . .	302	304	299	167
	13,035	27,070	28,236	4,790
North Wales—				
Anglesea	1,330	2,060	9,373	1,235
Caernarvonshire . .	1,174	3,998	18,071	2,065
Denbighshire . . .	1,343	3,023	13,066	2,980
Flintshire	161	2,377	5,092	3,779
Merionethshire . . .	631	3,166	10,495	1,783
Montgomeryshire . .	1,054	3,886	8,244	3,618
	5,693	18,510	64,341	15,460
Total	28,734	59,513	103,495	25,263

With regard to these, Sir T. Phillips remarks that nearly one-half are taught in chapels belonging to the Welsh or Calvinistic Methodists.

The total number of persons receiving religious instruction in either day or Sunday Schools, exclusive of those attending Adventure and other schools, where such instruction is not professedly given, is shown in the following table:—

	Church.	Dissent.
Llandaff	16,351	45,942
St. David's	19,635	74,104
Bangor	10,634	55,381
St. Asaph	17,171	48,982
	63,791	224,409

Comparing increase of Church and Dissenting Schools between 1831 and 1846 in the former, and 1833 and 1846 in the latter, we find the ratio to be nearly equal:—

Church Schools in 1831 . . .	34,924	...	In 1846	63,791
Dissenting Schools in 1833 . . .	140,733	...	In 1846	224,409

Number of persons receiving religious instruction for every 100 of the population in 1846:—

	In Church Schools.	Dissenting Schools.	Total.
Llandaff	5·35	15·04	20·39
St. David's	5·71	21·54	27·25
Bangor	6·21	32·32	38·53
St. Asaph	7·63	21·77	29·40

NOTE.—The number of Sunday scholars is taken from the tables contained in the reports of the Welsh Education Commissioners, from which the agricultural districts of Monmouthshire are excluded; and for those districts some addition should be made. The tables of the Commissioners' Reports appear to be framed from returns made by the school managers. The only report of a Dissenting body which contains the number of Sunday scholars, is that found in the *Methodist Almanac*, which differs considerably from the Commissioners' tables in the case of North Wales, but substantially agrees with them in South Wales.

N.B.—These figures refer to the state of the various religious bodies in 1846, the year in which the Commissioners visited the country. We find Sir T. Phillips, in drawing up other tables of members and chapels for the same year, obtains the particulars from the reports of the several religious societies for 1847 and 1848. 7404 must be added to the totals of p. 350 in order to correspond with the total given above, which equals 224,409; 4000 is accounted for as above for the portion of Monmouthshire excluded from the Commissioners' Reports.

In some counties, such as Merioneth in North Wales, and Cardiganshire in South Wales, the number of persons receiving religious instruction is still greater—amounting in the latter county to nearly forty per cent., and in the former to upwards of forty-six per cent. of the entire population. That such numbers must comprise a large proportion of adult members would be apparent; and in many Church Sunday Schools, adult attendants

on religious worship are present, and are formed into classes, for the purpose of reading together portions of the Holy Scriptures. Adult attendants are, however, far more numerous in Dissenting than in Church Sunday Schools, in proportion to the children; and the number of Sunday scholars in the returns of Dissenting congregations comprise as well the adult attendants as those members of their families who have arrived at an age for receiving instruction—and thus include, more especially in the Welsh Methodist connexion, all the regular attendants on public worship.*

We shall here present the most important table of all, as meeting the assertion that the Sunday Schools are losing their hold on the Welsh people. In it will be found the number of members belonging to the different denominations, and the percentage of the totals to the population at different periods from 1833 to 1881:—

Denomination.	1833.	1846.	1871.	1881.
Nonconformists .	140,733			
Church of England .	44,983			
Total . .	185,716			
Calvinistic Methodists .	...	103,495	154,030	173,280
Church of England .	...	63,791	98,211	118,683
Congregationalists .	...	59,513	87,809	104,446
Baptists . . .	...	28,734	58,406	81,708
Wesleyan Methodists .	...	25,263	45,251	58,079
Total . . .	...	288,200†	443,707	536,196
Population of Wales and Monmouthshire }	918,431	1,104,599	1,412,580	1,571,269
Percentage of population	20·2	26	31·4	34·1

NOTE.—The particulars for 1833 and 1846 have been adopted from the published statistics of Sir T. Phillips, and those for 1871 and 1881 from the year-books of the various Nonconformist denominations for 1872 and 1882, which the author has personally consulted. It is but fair to state here, as is candidly acknowledged by that body itself, that the statistics of the Congregationalists are in a very unsatisfactory state compared with the other denominations. Two diaries, or year-books, are published by them, one at Dolgelley

* Collected and adapted from Sir T. Phillips's "Wales," *passim*.

† This total, it will be seen, is higher than the actual sum of the above figures by 7404. For explanation, see p. 51.

and the other at Bala. The latter adopts its statistics from the general congregational year-book, and the former from returns sent in by the various Churches of Wales. But for several years now, none have been sent in, and therefore the same figures have appeared for several years consecutively. The Bala year-book's highest figure between 1872 and 1882 is 87,809, and that of Dolgelley 104,446. It is evident both cannot be correct, and therefore we have taken the lowest to represent the number of Sunday scholars and teachers in 1871, and the highest for that of 1881. A movement is now on foot to get more accurate returns from the Churches. The Church of England in Wales does not publish the number of its Sunday-School members, but we have endeavoured to be just in our estimate of their present position. It will be recollected that Sir T. Phillips * had discovered that the increase of Church scholars between 1831 and 1846 was very nearly in the same ratio as that of dissenting schools between 1833 and 1846. Now, we have granted this proportion to be the same in 1871-81 between the Nonconformists and the Church of England, as it was in 1846, and upon this assumption have made our calculations. In comparing our totals with those found in the year-books, an apparent discrepancy will at once be discovered; but this will be soon reconciled, by remembering that we have in every instance deducted the numbers belonging to Welsh Sunday Schools in England, as our percentage has reference only to the population of Wales and Monmouthshire.

In comparing this percentage for the several periods it is most satisfactory to find, that not only has the number of members belonging to the Sunday Schools kept up with the population, but has also steadily gained upon it. In 1833 this percentage was 20·2; thirteen years after, in 1846, it was 26; twenty-five years after, in 1871, it was 31·4; and ten years after, in 1881, 34·1. Comparing the rate of increase of Sunday-School members with that of the population, we find the superiority to be much in favour of the former. For whilst the population has only increased 11·2 per cent. in the decade 1871-81, Sunday-School members have increased 20·8 per cent. The general accuracy of this computation is tested by reference to the statistics of individual places. On Sunday,

* See p. 351.

December 4, 1881, a census was made in the town of Bala of the members actually present at the various services for that day. The numbers present in the Sunday Schools stood thus:—

Calvinistic Methodists	. . . . .	459
Church of England	. . . . .	167
Congregationalists	. . . . .	144
Baptists	. . . . .	43
	Total	813
Population that year	. . . . .	1653
Percentage of population	. . . . .	49.1

This was the number, be it observed, in actual attendance. Adding one-fourth for the number on the books, the percentage here reaches as high as 61.4. At the town of Cardiff, in the year 1881, all the members of the Sunday Schools were treated to a repast in one of the public parks, in celebration of the birth of the Earl of Dumfries. The following numbers were published in the papers as having turned out on the occasion:—

Denominations.	Scholars.	Teachers.	Total.
Nonconformists	13,581	1,198	14,779
Church of England	4,547	350	4,897
Roman Catholics	2,200	15	2,215
	20,328	1,563	21,891

Those were only the children. Tickets for about 20,000 adults were also issued, making therefore an aggregate of 41,891. The population of the sub-district of Cardiff for 1881 was 94,766, which makes the percentage here to be 44.2.

With regard to the assertion “that a great deal of time is expended upon instruction in the mother tongue of the people,” there seems to be much misapprehension on the subject. If it be meant that “instruction in the mother tongue of the people” is given with the exclusive view of perpetuating the Welsh language, then we maintain that the charge is utterly untrue, except in a very few instances. It is certain that Welsh children are now taught to *read* English in the day schools, and to understand that language for ordinary conversation; still Welsh is the great medium of communication, as yet, with the bulk of the population. And this is pre-eminently the channel of religious instruction, whether through the pulpit, the press, or the Sunday School. It is evident,

therefore, that whatever time is devoted to the study of the language, is not for the sake of perpetuating it, but in order the better to profit spiritually thereby. The only time expended with the language exclusively as such, in addition to the mere mechanical labour of learning to read it, is that occupied with the explanation of the obsolete and unusual expressions of the Welsh Bible, which is indeed a peculiarity belonging to every language. In the case of children of Welsh parents living in English towns, or in parts of Wales where the English tongue predominates, is it alone true, that time is spent with the mother tongue for its own sake. Here, it certainly is a case of acquiring another tongue for a result, which the child might obtain by means of the instrument already in its possession, if only he attended an English place of worship. But inasmuch as many parents prefer taking their children with them to the Welsh churches and chapels, it is their wish that the children should undergo the labour of acquiring the Welsh language in addition to the English, in order to profit from the religious teaching given by teachers and pastor exclusively in the former tongue. Not until the English language has become so general in Wales as to justify the conversion of existing Welsh causes into English, will this practice be discontinued. This must be expected to take place more rapidly in the future than has been the case in the past. In this time of transition, and no doubt of trial, it is to be sincerely hoped, however, that the efficiency of the schools will not be suffered to droop; but, on the contrary, that whatever is superior and characteristic of them in their Welsh garb, shall continue to flourish and gain even a higher development, though the members should be found articulating in an adopted tongue.

We hope it has now been sufficiently demonstrated that the Sunday Schools do not lose their hold upon the Welsh people, nor do we think them to be less efficient than in days gone by, when the altered circumstances of the present time are taken into consideration. The people who delight in bewailing the degeneracy of things modern have lived in the world at least since the days of Solomon, and they still neglect his friendly admonition—"Say not thou; What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." Latterly, greater concern has been shown for the institution, than at almost any period of its existence. Within our memory, Sunday

Schools were looked upon as organizations quite apart from the Church, governed by separate officers, and working in a sphere entirely outside Church interference. Within the last twenty years, however a great reform has set in. The Church has taken the Sunday School more into its counsels; it inquires more for its welfare; advises, encourages, and incites to greater exertions for its progress, but without attempting to control its individual government; and the higher courts and assemblies of the various denominations, such as the congress of the Established Church, the unions of the Baptists and Congregationalists, the conference and assembly of the Wesleyan and Calvinistic Methodists, devote some sittings in each year, to keep up the living flame of zeal and devotion, or to fan it into ever-increasing intensity and brilliancy.

Nevertheless, it is now generally felt, that the adequacy of Sunday Schools to supply the religious training of the children and youth of the country, will be more than ever tested and strained, these coming years. The country, just now, is in a transitional, and no doubt truly critical, state. Religious teaching in day schools has been either entirely discontinued, or reduced to a minimum. Ever since the passing of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and the establishment of School Boards, followed by the transfer of almost all the British and Denominational Schools in Wales to the care of these Boards, Scriptural and religious teaching has been manifestly on the wane, as a part of the day-school curriculum. Though the Act does not directly discourage Scriptural teaching, still the restrictions imposed with regard to the time of such teaching, the necessity of applying the objectionable conscience clause when undertaken, the feeling that whatever time is devoted to it is taken from teaching subjects included in a scheme of payment by results, and the general conviction amongst Nonconformists that it is wrong in principle for the State to teach religion to its subjects, besides interfering with the special privilege of the Church of Christ, have tended to make what religious teaching is attempted, to be at once meagre, meaningless, and jejune.

There is no better proof of the steady development of this spirit of the age than what has been elaborately expressed in the recommendations made by the Commissioners of 1881. "We recommend," they say, "that in schemes for Welsh schools, other than schools of a

denominational character, any provision made for religious instruction shall be confined to the reading and explanation of Holy Scriptures, and shall not include instruction in the doctrines or formularies of any Church, sect, or denomination. We further recommend that no such instruction shall be given to any scholar, unless the written consent of the parent or guardian has been previously obtained." * Mr. Henry Richard, one of the commissioners, in a memorandum appended to the report, dissents even from these meagre recommendations of his colleagues, and gives as his views, "that in schools receiving grants from public sources, the instruction should be confined to secular elements." He even offers this as an alternative for boarding schools, or that all public aid should be given for proficiency in subjects other than religious, leaving these to be cared for by a special arrangement between parents and master. He further adds that "he has very little faith in the efficacy of a religious teaching out of which everything definite and positive has been eliminated, in deference to conscientious denominational susceptibilities." †

In this, we think, Mr. Richard is quite mistaken. Whatever be the value of his experience, from knowledge which we fondly believe to be hardly less authenticated, we would testify that the Scriptural lessons given under the old *régime* of the British and Foreign School Society, which was considered to be quite undenominational, *did* produce lasting impressions on the minds and hearts of the scholars. Sunday-School teachers were made agreeably conscious of this by the intelligent, ready, and reverent answers of such scholars when questioned in the class, or in the general catechising at the end of the school. The lack of religious knowledge in the rising generation is becoming palpable in these days—a result which arises, we think, not so much from any deterioration in the Sunday Schools, as from the loss of co-operation in the work by the day-school teacher. It stands to reason that so many hours devoted daily in the British and National Schools to religious teaching, and that by men fully competent to the work, most of them actuated by no mercenary feeling, being now diverted altogether to secular purposes, cannot but perceptibly tell upon the state of religious knowledge in the country. The author has ample proofs

* "Report on Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales, 1881," p. 53.

† *Ibid.*, Memorandum, p. 71.

of this deficiency, in boys from elementary schools who seem to have had very little, if any, religious training. Some gain scholarships on the foundation of the institution with which he is connected, and may be looked upon as the cream of intelligence in the schools from which they come; but the amount of Scriptural, not to say religious, knowledge they possess is pitifully defective. These must have depended entirely for this supply on what was formerly imparted in the day schools. Others of his pupils, who he knows have been trained in good Sunday Schools, supplemented by special classes conducted by their pastors, or have been drilled under the system of prizes organized by the London School Board, show a decided superiority both in religious knowledge and good behaviour over the *alumni* of school boards, where religious instruction is at a discount, and who either neglect the Sunday School, or live in districts where the institution is inefficient and lifeless.

There are few persons in Wales, who, with all their zeal for the spread of secular education among the masses, would rely upon this as the sole or chief means for the moral regeneration of their countrymen. Few, indeed, we presume, would even take up the less objectionable position, that secular instruction is an *indispensable supplement or adjunct* to religious training. The author of some very valuable hints on secular instruction was almost wholly confirmed in this theory by the report of the commissioners of 1846, on the state of education in Wales. This is a further instance of the wrong done not only to the nation by that prejudiced report, but also to truth, by supplying a false datum for this and, maybe, other similar inferences. "From the report which has lately been published on the state of education in Wales," says this author,* "there is one thing which appears very remarkable, independent of the lamentable state of ignorance which seems generally to prevail, which is this—that in those districts where the people seem to have a very considerable knowledge of Scripture, the state of their morals is of the lowest and most degrading kind." From this he infers, that such secular instruction *ought* to supplement religious teaching as "would, at the same time that it bore on their industrial pursuits, lead to an improved moral condition, by instilling in early life those feelings of self-respect and self-dependence, and those principles of

* Dawes' "Suggestive Hints," etc., p. xii. (*Introd.*).

honesty and truth which ought to be the guide of every one who lays claim to the character of a Christian man." The position maintained by most Welsh educationists, on the contrary, is that intellectual advancement, far from being indispensable to the moral improvement of the people, may, nevertheless, be made subservient to this end. They willingly concede that the enlargement of the intellect is not unfavourable to the improvement of the heart, that what is gained from secular knowledge may eventually be gained for Christianity; but they strenuously maintain that Scriptural truths alone are the foundation of all sound teaching, and without which an education of an exclusively secular character may directly lead to ruin and degradation.

The promoters of Sunday Schools go even further. They have always acted on the belief that not only are Scriptural truths the guide to moral actions, but that a hearty acceptance of them is the only real foundation of morality. The motive power, the living principle of the whole system of Christian morals, is "the *love* of Christ." Those alone, they maintain, have been rightly started on the path of duty and virtue, to whom Christ's commands are not heavy, because "His *love* has been shed abroad in their hearts," and who are able to say, "We *love* Him, because He first loved us." Christian workers, through the medium of Sunday Schools, do not wait, indeed, until they are satisfied of the child's regeneration, before beginning to inculcate Scripture truths upon his mind. On the contrary, having a regard to the age and capacity of those whom they instruct, they endeavour to make the elementary truths of the Christian faith to be understood and deeply rooted in the mind, from the earliest period of life. They know that Scripture truths are the basis of the Holy Spirit's operation. The instrument through which He works in quickening the new life within, is the revealed and inspired Word. "The words that I speak unto you," says the Saviour, "they are spirit and they are life." The Word is "an incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever." The special function of the Spirit with regard to the *written* Word is what was promised to the disciples with regard to the *spoken* Word—"He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have spoken to you." The teacher does not know what word will be blessed into life everlasting, nor when it may receive the fructifying influence from above. Just as the tiny

seeds, blown from the plant, and scattered by the winds to the four quarters of the heavens, have been known to retain their germinating power for years ; or as the grain of wheat, found by chance in the sarcophagus of the Egyptian mummy, when brought into contact with the earth, the rain, and the sun's heat, has been known to sprout into life ; so also a word lodged in the memory through much trouble, and with no apparent effect at the time, may years after, in the Spirit's own good time, be the medium of an operation whose ultimate development will be nothing less than life everlasting.

It is the teacher's peculiar privilege, to guide and encourage the treasuring of God's Word in the memory of his scholars—"in the morning," as it were, "sowing the seed, and in the evening withholding not his hand : for he knoweth not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." He does not certainly delay the teaching of morality until he gets satisfactory evidence that the child is actuated by a love to his Redeemer, in order to endeavour to walk and please Him. On the contrary, he is fully cognizant of the truth, that the natural disposition is not altogether out of his reach to try to improve. Man, he knows, is by nature a rational being, and much can be done, apart from the special interposition of the Divine Agent, to train the child in the proper discernment of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, and to a corresponding behaviour. He further believes this course to be the most probable predisposing element for the heavenly operation. Still with him it is an ever-present conviction, that no permanent moral course, no efficient motive to uprightness of conduct, under all circumstances and exigencies, can possibly result, but from a feeling of obligation to live to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us." The experience of the old Roman poet and moralist, as well as of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, will otherwise invariably continue to recur:—"Meliora video proboque, deteriora sequor" (I know and approve of good things, but I follow the evil). A feeling of self-respect, or a desire to merit the approbation of society, may keep a man from many an evil action, but the fear of the Lord, the fear of offending a loving Father and a compassionate Saviour, is alone the beginning of true wisdom. This alone is the motive which can regulate the secret thoughts, and make a man equally moral, whether he spends his life in the seclusion of his closet, or every hour and moment in contact with the

most refined conventionalities of society. In short, this is the vital distinction between the regenerate and *unregenerate*. The one is represented by our Saviour as the hearer of the word, but not the doer of it—not the doer of it in the true sense of the word, from an immutable and never-failing motive. The other is the hearer and real doer of the word as well. The one is the house built upon the sand, which is unable to resist the force of the wind of temptation, the flood of affliction, and the great shock of death itself; the other alone is the house on the rock whose innermost experience will be calm and constant notwithstanding all the vicissitudes and extremes of life, and who will have “boldness in the day of judgment,” because “perfect love casteth out fear.”

It is not our intention further to discuss whose province it is to impart this high instruction—whether the Church exclusively, or ought the State also to see that it is supplied for its subjects? Those who accept the latter alternative do not deny that the Church, as a spiritual organization, apart from her connection with the State, ought to look upon the teaching of religion and morality to the rising generation as one of her peculiar functions. But they further hold that the great opportunity possessed by the State to supplement this ought to be carefully utilized. Since, however, all past legislation, as well as prospective arrangements, seem to favour its relegation altogether to the Church, any further discussion of the subject would seem too much like a *dadl wedi barn*—an argument after the verdict—to justify its being taken up. In common with the commissioner whose words have already been quoted, the advocates of no-State-interference do not despair of the Church’s fidelity to her mission. Like him, they feel “that in a country where the doctrines and observances of religion are held in such high and universal estimation as they are in Wales, there is no danger that the religious instruction of children will be neglected, if left to the care of parents and their pastors.” They advocate this course not because they are “hostile or indifferent to religious instruction as a part of education, but because they have the sincere conviction that this plan will best subserve the interests not only of religious equality, but of religious education.” At the same time, we feel it our duty to warn our fellow-Christians in Wales that belief alone is not sufficient to bring about the desired result. Destruction has always been easier than reconstruction. An effort must be made to go on, else

a retrogressive motion will at once set in. Those who have been the direct agents in bringing about an exclusion of the Bible, to all intents and purposes, from the day schools, would show a commendable consistency, by heartily co-operating in having the deficiency produced by this change immediately and efficiently remedied. Sunday Schools must undoubtedly be one of the permanent institutions for accomplishing this end; but whether they can be so perfected as to be sufficient of themselves to secure the end, or must be supplemented by some week-day organizations, time alone will show. Hitherto in Wales no extra aid has been called to requisition, and that most likely because of the faith which the leaders of the people have in their venerable institution. Will it be adequate? We are desirous of giving it a fair trial. But undoubtedly, numerous further modifications and adaptations will be required to meet the exigencies of the times. Since this is a most vital question at the present juncture, we shall reserve a few suggestive hints on the subject for another and a final chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONDITIONS OF THE FUTURE PROSPERITY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF WALES.

Their existence in the future hardly doubtful—Still, many improvements necessary—First, improved methods of instruction by teachers—Piety and zeal not sufficient—Difficulties of religious instruction—Our forefathers accomplishing much without system—Times changed—Better order requisite in junior departments—How to secure the adoption of better methods—Training classes for teachers to be formed—A sketch of the rise of these in England—Unknown to Wales in connection with Sunday Schools—More required than a class to prepare subject-matter of lesson—What should be the aim of training classes?—Studying the *science* of education—Its principles founded on metaphysics—Advantages of a knowledge of philosophy—Development of human faculties—Association of ideas and memory—A knowledge of logic useful—This department not alien to the Welsh mind—Training classes and the *art* of teaching—The various methods of communicating knowledge—Relative importance—The catechetical to be supreme—Questions should be connected—Adapted to age—Specimens—Suggestions to training classes—Improved appliances also necessary for the success of schools—Nothing, however, to dispense with personal preparation—Teachers of the past noted for this—Incentives to preparation—For success of schools, the missionary spirit to be kept alive—Day schools and average attendance—To swell numbers in Sunday Schools, infant classes to be organized—The last and chief aim of Sunday Schools to be always kept in view, the moral regeneration of the people—What was done in the past in this respect—Their rise opportune—Rapid increase of population—Prospects of future material prosperity—Need of being supported—Conclusion.

WILL the Sunday School exist in Wales at the end of another century? Will it present the same efficient and flourishing state then as it does now? These are questions more easily asked than answered. Many of the most ardent supporters of the institution would at once reply that it *will* and *must* exist; more would

humbly dare think that, because of the good work accomplished by it in the past, it *deserves* to exist; while most will acquiesce in the conclusion that in view of the great work continually requiring to be done, there is *need* for it to exist. We also feel disposed to rank ourselves with the first class, at the same time readily acknowledging that it must undergo several important changes and modifications in order to secure what is implied in the second of the above questions. The elasticity, however, which it has shown in the past in meeting the exigencies of the times, is a sufficient guarantee that its vitality and resources will prove effectual, in coping with all the peculiarities of the future. But what are the conditions of its future prosperity? Bearing in mind the altered circumstances of the Principality as already described in the previous chapter, and the increased taxation upon the resources of the school because of the peculiar rivalry in which it is placed in relation to secular institutions, we do not think it difficult to discover some of the most important of these conditions. We shall, therefore, as a not unfitting termination to our review of the past, offer a few remarks on the future aspect of our subject. These must necessarily assume the form more of suggestive hints than an exhaustive discussion of all the questions bearing upon the inquiry. Some difficulty, indeed, presents itself at the outset against a thoroughly succinct treatment, owing to the twofold aspect of the Welsh institution—being at the same time a school for the training up of children in religious knowledge, and a kind of theological gymnasium for youth and adults. But we must leave it to the good sense of the reader to distinguish, without our always specifying it, what is exclusively intended for the one, and what can only be applicable to the other. Among the most important and pressing reforms and practices essential to the future well-being of the Sunday Schools in Wales, we enumerate the following:—

1. The desirability of adopting improved *methods* of instruction by the teachers. At present, it may be safely estimated, by giving only one for every ten scholars, there are over sixty-seven thousand teachers engaged in Sunday-School work in Wales, every Sunday. In the highest qualifications requisite for a teacher, they will bear comparison with those of any other country. They are men possessing the deepest sympathy with the eternal welfare of those whom they instruct; they are endowed with undoubted piety

themselves as a class; they have a strong conviction of the paramount importance of the truths which they teach; and they are ready to spend and be spent in the service of their Lord and Master. Still when it is considered how deficient the great body of them are in *method*, how limited their knowledge is of the *art of teaching*, this large army must be looked upon more in the light of undrilled and raw recruits, than of disciplined and experienced veterans. An inevitable consequence of this lack of knowledge of the principles of teaching, is a waste of much of their resources, small results in proportion to the time and labour bestowed, and a failure very often to derive any real enjoyment from the act of teaching, however much they may love the work.

The peculiarities of religious instruction are such that it requires more tact, skill, and teaching power to impart it than any branch of secular study. Though a child from early infancy has moral and religious susceptibilities, still from the abstract nature of the subject matter taught, there is great difficulty in arresting the attention and concentrating the thought of children upon it for any length of time, which is not the case with secular subjects. Whether we think of geography, natural history, astronomy, or even natural philosophy, the teacher can at once summon the natural curiosity which every child has to know about objects immediately surrounding him, as a potent aid in presenting to the mind of the learner, and fixing in his memory, any information he has to impart concerning them. But God is unseen; heaven and hell can only be described by figures and comparisons; the various relations in which man stands before God as a creature, a subject, and condemned sinner, together with the grand provision disclosed in the scheme of salvation for his restoration to the image which he has lost, have very few counterparts in a child's experience to render them intelligible; hence it is that the teacher's command of the best methods and most approved style of communicating his knowledge is absolutely necessary. Our forefathers in Wales, no doubt, were able to produce mighty results when comparatively ignorant of these modern resources, which proves that zeal, earnestness, and determination can make up for the lack of many accessories. "*Ni ddiffyg arfar was gwyh*" (A skilful workman will not fail for want of a tool). Still, who can deny that the results would have been greater, if they had been endowed with all the qualifications desirable for a

teacher ; or, at any rate, that the same results would have been achieved with greater enjoyment, and a considerable saving of time and energy ?

The circumstances of the present times, however, imperatively demand a knowledge of right methods of imparting knowledge, before hardly any success in teaching can be expected. It is necessary in order to secure the *attention* of the class. The same children who for five days of the week, have been under the tuition of men specially trained for their work—men who have profited from the wisdom and experience of the past concerning the best way to interest and edify those under their charge—naturally expect similar tact in their Sunday-School instructors, before their attention can be secured, and consequently their intellect and affections improved. From the want of power to secure attention, arises, to a great measure, the absence of good *order* too often noticed in the junior classes of our Sunday Schools. The following description of a school in England is not far from being applicable to the younger department of many a school in Wales :—

“ Most of the schools present scenes of sad disorder, if not of absolute confusion during the hours of teaching. The Highland piper, who spoke with rapture of one occasion when he was with bonnie Prince Charlie, and when ‘ there were nineteen pipers a’ thegither, each playing a different tune,’ and he ‘ thocht he was in heaven ! ’ would have felt thoroughly at home in many a London school ; but the scene is hardly so pleasing to educational eyes and ears.” *

Some have attributed the tumultuous noise and palpable disorder too often witnessed in a Sabbath School, to the natural shrinking the teachers have from exercising their authority, lest the child should be disgusted with school, and withdraw altogether from the influence of Christian instruction. The teacher’s services being gratuitous, and the child’s attendance optional, it is sometimes maintained that the same authority and discipline which are the first characteristic of a good day school, cannot be demanded or secured for a Sunday School. But this defect far oftener results from the inability of the teacher (owing to a want of previous training) to interest the children, than from any undue advantage

* “ Our Work,” by W. H. Groser, B.Sc., p. 178.

taken by the scholars of the peculiarity of the constitution of the school. It is too often the painful duty of the Sunday-School teacher, like his brother of the day school (quoting the characteristic words of Sir Walter Scott), "to control petulance, to excite indifference to action, to strive to enlighten stupidity, and to labour to soften obstinacy;" and this being so, can it be expected that the desired results will be realized otherwise than by adopting similar methods of arrangement, government, and of securing attention, in the former class of schools, as in the latter? Before children can be *impressed*, they must be *instructed*, and before they can be instructed, their attention must be thoroughly *awakened*. How is this to be secured? There can be only one answer to the question: By right methods. It is high time the antiquated notion "that any one who knows is able to teach," should be hunted out of all its remaining lurking places. From all the public elementary schools, thanks to Government interference, it has been effectually banished. In higher schools, both public and private, in too many of the colleges, and especially in Sunday Schools, it still reigns in almost undisturbed peace. For often in the latter institutions, it is even now supposed, as Mr. Groser remarks, "that to be pious and to be apt to teach are one and the same thing; that a sufficiency of Divine *grace* for personal salvation involves a sufficiency of Divine *knowledge* for the religious education of others, or that because one has felt the renewing power of the Spirit, he is thereby invested with ability rightly to "divide the word of truth."* Having now sufficiently demonstrated, it is to be hoped, the need for teachers to be well up in the art they are called upon to practise, the question arises, how is this to be secured? which leads us to another condition of the prosperity of our schools.

2. The formation of a training class in connection with every large school; or for a number of smaller schools grouped together. It is wonderful to think how slow Wales has been to move in this matter. Preparatory classes for teachers to extend their knowledge of Biblical and theological subjects, have been known in the Principality as early as in England, if not earlier; but it is an undeniable fact that the latter country has been far ahead in the provisions made for training teachers in the best methods of im-

* "Teacher-Training," p. 16.

parting knowledge. The process of development was somewhat slow there too. As far as we have been able to gather, it was about the years 1848 and 1849 that "Teachers' Mutual Instruction Classes" were first organized in London. These were confined altogether to preparation in the subject-matter of the lesson taken in hand. Several members had distinct subjects allotted to them, on which they came prepared to give explanations, such as geography, manners and customs, evidences of Christianity, fulfilment of prophecy, natural history, Jewish history, etc., and by this division of labour the knowledge of the whole class was increased. This was excellent so far as it went. But it soon became evident that this did not cover the whole field of preparation in order to become efficient teachers, and therefore, in 1856, a TRAINING CLASS was organized, having for its object to deliver a course of lectures on the theory of teaching, supplemented by model lessons, in which the members were brought to notice specimens of actual teaching, and in turns to take part in a similar process themselves. Hitherto it is to be observed, preparation classes and training classes had been kept as separate organizations, but in the year 1859 a new arrangement was inaugurated by the Sunday School Union, by which the meetings for the preparations of lessons were incorporated with the training class. The latter department consisted of lectures on some topic connected with the science of education, of "Model Lessons," and "Practice Lessons." This last arrangement has been the type after which all such classes have been formed in various parts of the country ever since.

Nothing of this kind, so far as we are aware, has been ever attempted in Wales in connection with the Sunday Schools. Now that the matter is ventilated, and having such beneficial results demonstrated before our eyes, in the work of the normal colleges in connection with day-school teachers' training, it is to be hoped that the adoption of these classes will at once take place. There is now no further need of the slow deliberation which preceded their establishment in England. It is to the credit of Mrs. Davids that in her prize essay on the Sunday School she advocated the formation of these classes at least twelve years before they were fairly started. Her words are well worth quoting, as giving a concise description of their nature to those who may still be ignorant of them. "Attached to every school," she says, "should be a class

not merely for the purpose of imparting general Biblical instruction but chiefly to train the young aspirants to office. The leader of their class must pre-eminently know how to teach. He would, from Sabbath to Sabbath, instruct the candidates as to the best method of managing a class, giving them rules and hints, reading with them, and explaining to them the lessons they would have to impart. . . . If it be asserted that young persons would object to such a preparatory training, we can only say those who wish to rush into a post so fearfully responsible as that of a Sunday School teacher without any knowledge of the duties it imposes, and without any wish to acquire the ability to discharge those duties aright, are so morally unfit for the office that it is every minister's and every superintendent's painful duty to refuse their services entirely."

Some have thought it desirable to distinguish *actual* from *intending* teachers, and to have a special class for each. The training class, strictly so called, is to be confined to the former, while what is called a *normal* class would seem to be better adapted to the latter. This normal class, in addition to hints on the best methods of imparting knowledge, has for its object the acquisition of systematic Bible knowledge, in which the raw recruits from whose ranks actual teachers are drawn too often show themselves sadly deficient. In Wales, however, at the outset, this subdivision will hardly be thought necessary. Actual and intending teachers are too much on a level in utter want of training for the duties of their important office to require separate handling. Perhaps the best way of introducing these classes into Wales will be as an accretion to the Bible classes already found to exist pretty generally. Most pastors of churches have these for both males and females, conducted regularly during the winter months, on one or two evenings a week. Most of the members, again, being either actual or intending teachers in the Sunday School, there would be nothing more natural and reasonable, in the face of the altered circumstances of the times, than to arrange another evening each week, or devote the greater part of their present arrangement for instruction in the active duties of teachers. The pastor would, no doubt, obtain ready as well as efficient help from the trained teachers of board schools, who are now so numerous, and whose experience in the work, as well as their well-known professional training, would cause their suggestions to be received with all due deference and gratitude.

But before discussing other modes of operation with a view to this end, inasmuch as this constitutes such an essential element of the future prosperity of our schools, the exact topics of consideration in the classes, or whatever other agency employed, demand a few further remarks.

3. It is of paramount importance, in the first place, that teachers of Sunday Schools should be well grounded in the *science* of education. Every science is more important than its corresponding art, for the latter is always founded on the former. Art is but a set of rules, which must necessarily be limited to the number of cases which have actually occurred, or are contemplated to occur; but science deals with fundamental principles, which apply alike to all possible cases. It would be a poor preparation, in order to become an accomplished physician, to make a few occasional walks through the wards of an hospital; for here the student's knowledge would be altogether limited to the number of cases which come under his observation, and, however thoroughly he may have studied these, he would be ill prepared to meet exceptional cases and entirely new circumstances. Hence it is indispensable for the medical practitioner, first of all, to have studied principles, and to be conversant with the science of his calling, in order to observe cases with any amount of intelligence, and to feel that he has safe resources to fall back upon when required to deal with any sudden and complicated exigency. It is exactly the same with teaching. There are here a science and an art. The one supplies a number of practical rules for guidance in the work; the other takes up more abstract points. It seeks to find a reason why one rule is more applicable in one case than another, and codifies a collection of principles which will enable the teacher to vary his methods in order to meet the different ages, grades, and attainments of his scholars, and all other circumstances which try the efficacy of his sacred calling.

Now there is no science that is absolutely independent of every other—far otherwise; most, if not all, sciences are intertwined with, or dove-tailed, as it were, into others. Thus the science of astronomy depends upon arithmetic, geometry, algebra, natural philosophy, etc.; the science of medicine depends on physiology, chemistry, mental and mechanical philosophy, etc.; and so of almost every other science. Agreeable to the same complicity, the

science of education is far from being isolated. In elaborating the principles of this science, we must draw upon physiology, metaphysics, ethics, and theology, but chiefly, no doubt, upon mental philosophy or metaphysics. To a teacher whose avocation deals exclusively with the various phenomena of the human mind, it seems most reasonable that he himself should know something of the faculties of the mind—their relation to the external world, their connection with and interdependence upon one another, and generally with the laws which regulate the operation of this wonderful mechanism. It is the province of the teacher to store the mind with facts, to assist in the development of its faculties, and to train it for discharging its highest functions; consequently, in order to be able to accomplish this task in the most systematic way, he ought to be conversant with the *science* of mind which analyzes these faculties and investigates the laws of their uniform operation. In itself this is a most exalted study. The mind is the instrument with which every other science is elaborated, and not improperly may the science of the mind, therefore, be styled the *science of sciences*; in short, quoting the words adopted as a motto by one of the greatest of modern philosophers, “On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind.” The practical connection between this science and the functions of the teacher has been forcibly described by Dugald Stewart. “Education,” he says, “would be more systematic and enlightened if the powers and faculties on which it operates were more scientifically examined and better understood. What is the whole business of education but a practical application of rules deduced from our own experiments, or from those of others, on the most effectual modes of developing and cultivating the intellectual faculties and the moral principles?”

A few illustrations of the practical connection between a knowledge of the science of mind and successful teaching may here be not inopportune. The development of man’s intellectual faculties follows a certain order. The first period of a child’s life has been called the *Age of Perception*; the second period, that of *Conception or Imagination*; and the third, that of *Reason, Judgment, or Reflection*. In the first, or infant stage, he is almost wholly concerned with sensible objects. His knowledge is increased by directly coming in contact with the external world. The child

delights to exercise those senses through which material objects impress him—his sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, and the sixth, discovered by modern philosophers, the muscular sense. Hence, in infant tuition, the successful teacher always illustrates his lessons more by presenting to his class visible objects than by mere verbal descriptions. In the age of *conception* the child has advanced a considerable step. He is now able to recall his perceptions. The “mind’s eye” now sees an object which is no longer visible to the bodily eye; and the child, through the power of his imagination, is able to group conceptions together, and to form *secondary* ideas. The successful teacher is cognizant of this, and therefore he now substitutes for ocular demonstrations, word pictures, and the learning of the unknown through the known. Soon after passing ten years of age, the third stage is entered upon—that of *Reason* or *Judgment*; and in order to secure the attention of his class, the teacher must evidently enlarge the sphere of his subjects and his methods. He now takes his pupils more into his own secrets, makes them feel they have reached his own level as regards, at least, all the modes of acquiring knowledge. His pupils now delight in argument, in forming independent opinions, and in discerning *abstract ideas*, grouping objects by the qualities in which they all agree, and not dealing with them individually. An experienced teacher would no more think of applying the things of one stage to another, than an experienced nurse would think of feeding the infant under her charge with strong meat and not with tender milk. It is the same with the development of the emotions and the regulation of the will. The thoughtful teacher always studies in what order the relative strength of the former is manifested, so as to be able to present the strongest motives for the due exercise of the latter. His highest aim is to cultivate in his pupils an enlightened and sensitive conscience, which by many is considered something more than an emotion—a separate moral faculty—and to bring every consideration so to affect the will as to cause it “to delight in the law of the Lord, and in his law to meditate day and night.”

Take another illustration of the importance of a knowledge of mental philosophy for a teacher, as shown in the cultivation of the faculty of memory. Every teacher is directly concerned with the best way of strengthening this faculty, how it can be made to

contain the greatest number of facts, and to reproduce or *recollect* these facts with the greatest readiness. To this end a knowledge of the *laws of association* or *mental suggestion* is absolutely necessary. By these he is taught to present facts to the mind according to their true relations, and not as dependent upon incidental and arbitrary connections. For example, cause and effect, principle and reason, should always be presented together to the mind. In teaching the unknown, any point of similarity, or even dissimilarity, to the known pointed out, will be a help to remember it; and so with regard to every other tie or link which is known to bind associations together.

In like manner a practical knowledge of logic can be made most subservient to the business of teaching. By an application of this science, the teacher will be able to distinguish between sound and false reasoning, to eliminate the accidental from the essential, to discover and elaborate general principles, to accustom himself and his pupils to connected arguments, and generally to acquire clearness and precision of thought.

English writers and speakers have been accustomed to apologize to Sunday School teachers in this country for directing their attention to the study of metaphysics as a necessary part of their avocation. One of these says that "the mention of metaphysics in almost every social circle will be found to excite a feeling, if not an expression, of antipathy on the part of at least a majority of the persons present. . . . The popular view of physiology in England," he remarks, "is 'horrid;' metaphysics, 'dreadfully dry;' ethics, 'a bore;' and theology, 'a thing for parsons and professors.'" It would be strange if this were the case with the Welsh teachers of the present day. Our English critics, without exception, have declared metaphysical studies a predilection of the Welsh mind—whether they were admiring the poor peasants for their good taste in prosecuting them, or reproving them for their temerity in meddling with them. We do not think the present race to be degenerate descendants of nobler ancestors; and we presume, therefore, that they could enter on nothing with greater zest than a course of lectures, elucidating the connection between the science of mind and the science of education. This would be doubly attractive, if a knowledge of general principles should be brought to bear, not on the practice of teaching generally, but

specially on the particular work of a Sunday School, and, moreover—with regard to the double aspect of the Welsh institution—a school for children, and a college for adults.

4. Then a natural department of study for a training class would be the practical rules which directly bear on the *art of teaching*. Science deals with principles, art with rules. It has always been found advantageous to express the investigations of science in the shape of concise rules or formulæ. The mathematical student, when applying his formulæ, does not take the trouble to go through the process of deducting them, on every occasion that they are used. He knows the principles on which they rest, but satisfies himself with merely remembering the *result* of the lengthy investigation, when applying it for any practical purpose. So it is with the art of teaching. The study of the science has enabled educationists to draw up a number of rules which the teacher can easily remember, and use as guides, both in the preparation of his lessons, and in communicating his own knowledge to the class.

The most approved methods of communicating knowledge can be comprised under four divisions:—

1. The Interrogative or Catechetical method.
2. The Elliptical method.
3. The Lecturing or Dogmatic method.
4. The Illustrative method.

Two other methods are sometimes added to these, viz., The Picturing-out method, and the Demonstrative method; but a little consideration will at once show that they are only modifications of the fourth. Who can tell what an advantage it would be for every teacher in our Sunday Schools, to be duly trained in the proper use and relative importance of these different methods? It is very possible that some of the more gifted make use of these various styles, though ignorant of the nomenclature by which they are scientifically distinguished. If they teach at all, it is by one or more of the above methods they perform the work. Being founded on nature, the impulse of true genius necessarily finds its expression through these channels. It has been said of the mighty preachers of the last generation in Wales that “they used, without hesitation or stint, all the forms of speech that were at their command—trope, metaphor, allegory, graphic pictorial description, bold prosopopœia, solemn invocation, impassioned appeal, dramatic dia-

logue, and action. They did this, not of set purpose, for they might not even know the names that rhetoricians had given to those figures of speech, but because, following the dictates of their own natural genius for oratory, such were the means that seemed best adapted to produce the impressions they desired." Because a few of the leading preachers of the day stumbled, as it were, over those various styles of oratory, would any one maintain that the study of rhetoric, logic, and *belles lettres*, would have been superfluous to the class, or meaningless even to the leaders of pulpit oratory? So of teachers; granting that a few have been able to interest, instruct, and impress, without training, how many hundreds have always existed to whom training was indispensable, and who of the best endowed but would have gladly availed themselves of a little systematic help?

All the teachers in Wales, though untrained, make use of three, at least, of the above methods of communicating knowledge. What they mostly fail in, under the circumstances, is the undue preponderance they give to one over the others, and in the quality and style of whatever method used. Most teachers are liable to adopt the *Lecturing or Dogmatic method* too much, thereby making the class mere passive listeners—too often with very lax attention—and consequently taking with them but vague notions of the subject under treatment. Untrained teachers very seldom try to lead their pupils to find the answer out themselves. They are very deficient in the art of drawing out from the scholars what knowledge they already possess, in arriving at the unknown. Because of this, they fail very often to interest the class, inasmuch as they forget what pleasure it is for the young to exercise the faculties with which they are endowed. The Commissioners of 1846 described the teachers of the adults in Wales as too *rhetorical*, by which they meant, no doubt, an undue preponderance of the *lecturing* style. Two very important rules are laid down to guide teachers in this matter. The *first* is, *Never tell the pupil what he may reasonably be required to tell you*. Of course some things *must* be told, but before doing so the teacher ought to be satisfied that the answer to the question could not be educed. And to guard against an abuse of lecturing, a *second* rule is given, *Never tell anything of importance without drawing the substance of it again from the pupil in his own words*. The following example of the art of

drawing out, but which is nothing abler than what is produced by expert teachers in the course of almost every lesson delivered, is given by Mr. Groser, slightly altered, as he says, from Mr. Sydenham's "Notes of Lessons":—

"The teacher wishes to explain what a 'vision' is, and first requires a definition of a dream. But to the question, 'What is a dream?' he gets no answer. He proceeds thus: 'See how hard that little boy is working at his sums. What would you say his mind is doing?' '*He is thinking, teacher.*' 'And what are you doing all the day long?' '*Thinking.*' 'Yes, and is your thinking confined to the daytime or not?' '*No; we think in our sleep.*' 'When you think much during the night, what do you say you have been doing?' '*Dreaming, teacher.*' 'In what state are you when you are dreaming?' '*Asleep, teacher.*' 'Then what is dreaming?' '*Thinking in our sleep.*'" An ordinary teacher, no doubt, would have preferred by far to have told the children the definition of a dream at once, even though he knew he had the power of drawing it out. But who can fail to see how much livelier interest has been excited, and more lasting impression produced, by the method here described?

Untrained teachers, as far as our experience goes, seldom, if ever, make use of the *Elliptical method*. It consists in allowing the pupils to fill in one or more words in a sentence which the teacher has begun for them. The chief use of this method is in recapitulating what has already been learned, and it is more suitable for the younger classes, especially in simultaneous lessons. A specimen will be given presently.

The *Illustrative method* is nothing more than an ocular demonstration, or a verbal description of a subject under consideration, or any similitude by which it may be more easily and thoroughly understood and realized. The number and appositeness of illustrations used will depend altogether upon the genius and ability of the teacher in this department. This method is very necessary to successful teaching, especially with the young.

But the most important of all these methods, as granted by all, is the first on the list—the *Interrogative* or *Catechetical method*. This method, therefore, should predominate over all the others. Nothing shows the ability of a teacher better than his proficiency in the art of questioning. Good questioning should be *thoughtful*,

animated, definite, and adapted to the capacity of those to whom it is directed. It would be beside our purpose to enter at length into this important department. We can do nothing better here than direct the reader's attention to an excellent lecture by Mr. Fitch on the subject, published by the Sunday School Union, and content ourselves by making one or two extracts from it. Speaking of the order and *arrangement* which should always characterize a series of questions, he says:—

“We must ever remember that whatever is learnt confusedly is remembered confusedly, and that all effective teaching must be characterized by system and continuity. Hence, in proposing questions, it is very necessary to keep in view the importance of linking them together, of making each new answer the solution of some difficulty, which the former answer suggested, but did not explain, and of arranging all questions in the exact order in which the subject would naturally develop itself in the mind of a logical and systematic thinker. . . . We have often been struck, I dare say, in reading the newspapers, to find what plain and sensible evidence the witnesses all appear to give at judicial trials. We recognize the name of some particular person, and we know, perhaps, that he is an uneducated man, apt to talk in an incoherent and desultory way on most subjects, utterly incapable of telling a simple story without wandering and blundering, and very nervous withal; yet if he happens to have been a witness at a trial, and we read the published report of his testimony, we are surprised to find what a connected, straightforward story it is; there is no irrelevant or needless matter introduced, and yet not one significant fact is omitted. We wonder how such a man could have stood up in a crowded court, and narrated facts with all this propriety and good taste. But the truth is that the witness is not entitled to your praise. He never recited the narrative in the way implied by the newspaper report. But he stood opposite to a man who studied the art of questioning; and he replied in succession to a series of interrogations which the barrister proposed to him. The reporter for the press has done no more than copy down, in the exact order in which they were given, all the replies to these questions; and if the sum of these replies reads to us like a consistent narrative, it is because the lawyer knew how to marshal his facts beforehand, had the skill to determinate what was neces-

sary and what was not necessary to the case in hand, and to propose his questions so as to draw out, even from a confused and bewildered mind, a coherent statement of facts. We may take a hint, I think, from the practice of the bar in this respect; and especially in questioning by way of examination, we may remember that the answers of the children, if they could be taken down at the moment, ought to form a complete, orderly, and clear summary of the entire contents of the lesson."*

Questions, it has been said, should be adapted to the capacity of the pupils. To the young they ought not to be too difficult, so as to discourage them; and to the more advanced they should not be too simple and easy, so as to produce tediousness and even disgust. The following questions, adapted from the lecture already quoted, will serve as an example of what is suitable to very young children just beginning to read. They are supposed to have been reading the parable of the Good Samaritan. The first verse having been read—"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead" (Luke x. 30)—the teacher may now ask, What is the parable about? *A certain man.* Where did he go from? *Jerusalem.* Where to? *Jericho.* What sort of people did he fall among? *Thieves.* What did they do with his raiment? *Stripped him of it.* What did they do with the man himself? *Wounded him.* In what state did they leave him? *Half dead.* Having thus proceeded to the end of the narrative it will be desirable to introduce the *elliptical* method, by way of test that the lesson is thoroughly understood and remembered. The following may serve as a specimen of this method. We have now been reading the parable of—*The good Samaritan.* The traveller whom he so kindly assisted, started from—*Jerusalem.* And was on his way to—*Jericho.* Somewhere between the two places, probably in a lonely part of the road, he was attacked—*By thieves.* These first of all—*Stripped him.* Then—*Wounded him.* And such had been the violence of their treatment that they left him—*Half dead.* And so on.

From children of very tender age not much more than what has been described above could be expected; but with a more advanced class, questions avoiding the exact phraseology of Scripture should

* "The Art of Questioning," by J. G. Fitch, M.A., pp. 21, 22.

be considered, and answers in other words than those contained in the narrative should be required. The teacher might begin by asking, What is the parable about? (Various answers.) One says, *A man who went on a journey.* What do you call a man who goes on a journey? *A traveller.* In what country was the man travelling? *Judæa.* Let us trace his route on the map. In what direction was he travelling? *Eastward.* Through what kind of country? (Here the teacher's own information should supply a fact or two about its physical features.) What should you suppose from the lesson was the state of the country at the time? *Thinly peopled. Road unfrequented,* etc. How do you know this? *Because he fell among thieves.* Give another expression for "fell among." *Happened to meet with.* Another word for "thieves." *Robbers.* How did the robbers treat this traveller? *They stripped him of his raiment.* What does the word "raiment" mean? *Clothes.* Besides robbing him of his clothes, what else did they do? *Wounded him.* Explain that word. *Injured him. Hurt him very much,* etc. How do you know from the text that he was much hurt? *They left him half dead. They almost killed him.*

Without further enlarging on this head, we hope now to have cursorily touched on the most important points which a training class has to aim at. But no doubt, in order to secure the full comprehension of the various principles and rules discussed, it is indispensable to have recourse to the "Model lesson." These should be given at first by the best teachers, and then all the members of the class in succession should be asked to conduct a lesson in the presence of the others, to be followed by a friendly criticism on the faults and the merits. In addition to this, it would be well for the office of "visitor" to be revived in all the schools, whose duties should consist, not so much as formerly, in aiding the teacher to arrange the *matter* of the lesson, as to give him practical hints in *method*, thereby with Christian courtesy and consideration directly aiding in making the results of the training in the class on the week evening bear upon the actual teaching of the school on Sunday. In country districts much good might also be secured by devoting a portion of the district union meetings to enlighten the delegates, and thereby the teachers, in this all-important matter of *right methods.*

As it is to be hoped these training classes will speedily appear in

the Principality, it may assist some to know what subjects have, from time to time, been treated in them. Among others of the metaphysical character, we have observed the following:—The mind and its growth; the bodily powers and the senses; gradual unfolding of the mental and moral faculties; association of ideas; the best means of availing ourselves of each faculty, and how to direct its exercise. Of the practical side of the subject, the following may serve as examples:—The art of questioning; illustrations, and how to use them; methods of explanation; arrangement and organization of classes; the teaching of infants; rewards and punishments; government and discipline; unruly scholars, and how to deal with them; the application of Bible truths; personal habits and example of the teacher. Many to whom this study of the science and art of teaching may be a new enterprise, will feel interested to know some of the works which have been published in this department. Among others treating the subject in its general aspects, we may mention Dunn's "Principles of Teaching," Stow's "Training School Manual," Gill's and Morrison's "School Management," Collins's "Teacher's Companion," Currie's "Early and Infant School Education," Tate's "Treatise on the Principles of Education." The best list of books written on pedagogy, with special reference to Sunday Schools, will be found in the catalogue of the Sunday School Union. Among others may be specified, "Lectures to Teachers," "Our Work," Todd's "Sunday School Teacher," "The Infant Class in the Sunday School;" and besides these as direct aids, "Notes of Lessons," by G. Sydenham, and Dr. and Miss Mayo on the same subject.

5. Another special requisite for the effective conduct of our future Welsh Sunday School, is the adoption of improved appliances of instruction. From a defective recognition of the importance of improved methods has probably resulted in past years the all but complete disregard of improved appliances. By these we mean chiefly whatever can be presented to the *eye* as helps in conveying correct notions of objects to children, and in exciting greater interest in them. The difficulty of procuring, in the vernacular, such appliances as depend on language for an application of their meaning, has, no doubt, been another cause of their having been so little in requisition. But the chief reason, we guess, has been the desire, inherited from the very starting of the schools

in Wales, arising from the peculiar objection urged against their establishment, to avoid every appearance of manual labour in connection with them on the Lord's Day. It is high time, however, that such a sentiment should be resolutely scouted from existence. Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. If it has seemed good to the Divine Author of Scriptures to present many a vital truth through parables, biographies, manners, and customs different from our own, and in geographical connections which we cannot be expected to realize by eyesight, then it is consistent with every reason that whatever efforts have for their object to simplify and elucidate these media, must be in harmony with the intentions of the Divine Author himself. With the spread of the English language in the Principality, and the familiarity of the rising generation with these appliances in the day schools, the various provisions made to illustrate Scripture truths can now be as thoroughly understood in English as in Welsh. Hence the walls of the Sunday School-room should be adorned with maps of the various countries mentioned in the Bible, views of animals and plants, prints illustrating some of the parables and the manners and customs of the Jews, chronological tables of the most important Scriptural events, and genealogical tables of the successive kings of Judah and Israel. Where practicable, a small museum, containing as many Scriptural specimens as can be secured, would be a no mean acquisition.

Since the junior classes must be taught the alphabet, spelling, and reading in our schools so long as the Welsh language is upheld, a box of movable letters ought, in these days, to be considered as an indispensable piece of apparatus. Cards for spelling and reading should also be more extensively used; better-graduated books should be prepared; and even the presence of a black-board, with the manual labour of drawing letters and diagrams thereon, ought not to be looked upon as any invasion of the sanctity of the Sabbath. The old drawling, humdrum method of teaching the alphabet by repeating the letters from *a* to *y* (the alpha and omega of the Welsh alphabet), and then back again, should at once be replaced by the more philosophical plan of choosing the most similar in form or sound, such as *b* and *d*; *d* and *dd*; *m* and *n*; *l* and *ll*, etc.; and by means of the box of movable letters, of combining them in short syllables and sen-

tences, so as to give an interest to the children in the work, by leading them to perceive that what seemed to them at first to be only an unmeaning sound, was, after all, the symbol of an agreeable thought or a familiar expression. We need not dwell further on the importance of making the eye, as far as possible, the assistant of the other senses. "The eye," as has been well observed, "remembers;" and considering the accuracy of eye-perceptions, compared with those of the other senses, another familiar expression to philosophers can hardly be too strong,—“The eye makes no mistakes.” The truth so tersely expressed by the Roman poet, to the Pisos, commends itself with equal, if not greater, force to the Sunday-School teacher of the present day:—

“Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quae
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.”*

6. Hitherto we have dwelt on conditions of future prosperity, which must be introduced as almost entirely *new* elements, into the Welsh system. It must, however, be remembered that the conditions of *past* progress do not become antiquated and meaningless. Rather in the comprehensive style of our Lord on another subject, we would say,—the new conditions must be honoured and the old must not be left dishonoured.* Foremost of these is the absolute importance for every teacher to attend his class thoroughly prepared in the lesson he intends to impart. To the credit of the Welsh teachers of the past age, they have faithfully and honourably done their duty in this respect, as far as preparing the subject-matter of the lesson went. Though hard-worked during the day, toiling in the depth of the coal-pit, or suspended from the rope on the perilous edge of the slate quarry, or subjected to all the vicissitudes of weather as farm labourers, or plying with unremitting application the tools of their craft, in the quiet of the evening, their zeal in the good work has enabled them to shake off the lethargy of a tired and exhausted nature, in order to prepare the allotted portion of Scripture against the Sunday class. Few of them could command the seclusion of a separate room for a study, or a great choice of authors, by which to whet their intel-

* More sluggishly do those things let in through the ear excite the mind than those which are submitted to the faithful eyes, and which the on-looker personally communicates to himself.

lect and guide their thoughts, but under multifarious disadvantages of family arrangements, and probably with only one, though a favourite commentary, to consult, they have been able to "search the Scriptures," in all their bearing upon the lesson, and to attain a success which has been truly wonderful.

This same devotedness to the work must be a characteristic of their successors, if the work is to prosper. But in addition to a mind well stored with the facts to be communicated, the teacher of the future must study beforehand how he can best clear up obscure points, how present old truths in new and varied aspects, and how illustrate by diagrams, specimens, interesting anecdote, and apt comparison, what he sees to be but imperfectly understood. He may seek aid and guidance from the preparation and training classes, but the secret of his success, after all, must result from his own private individual forethought and application. Intellectually and physically there is no evading of the divinely-appointed law, that no fruit is to be enjoyed but what has been connected, one way or another, with "the sweat of the brow." In order to arrive at exactness in the preparation, it is important that the principal ideas intended to be touched upon should be committed to writing, always having a respect to the logical sequence of thought. There would be no harm, indeed, in having the leading questions recorded, though every teacher should be such an expert in the art of questioning that he can form his interrogations as the occasion arises, but always directed towards a definite end.

As an incentive to the humblest labourer in this part of the vineyard, to persevere in this peculiar phase of his work, it may cheer him to remember that the most competent and successful teachers have not thought it superfluous to bestow much labour in preparations to meet their classes. Dr. Chalmers, when at St. Andrews, had a class of poor children in the Sunday School, and after his death, there were found, amongst his papers, several sketches of lessons which he used to prepare for it. Dr. Arnold was never accustomed to meet even the junior classes without some special preparation. Being once asked why he kept up this practice, as though he was afraid he should not have enough to give them—"It is not," replied he, "because I fear I should not have enough to give them, but because I prefer that they should be supplied from a running stream rather than from a stagnant pool."

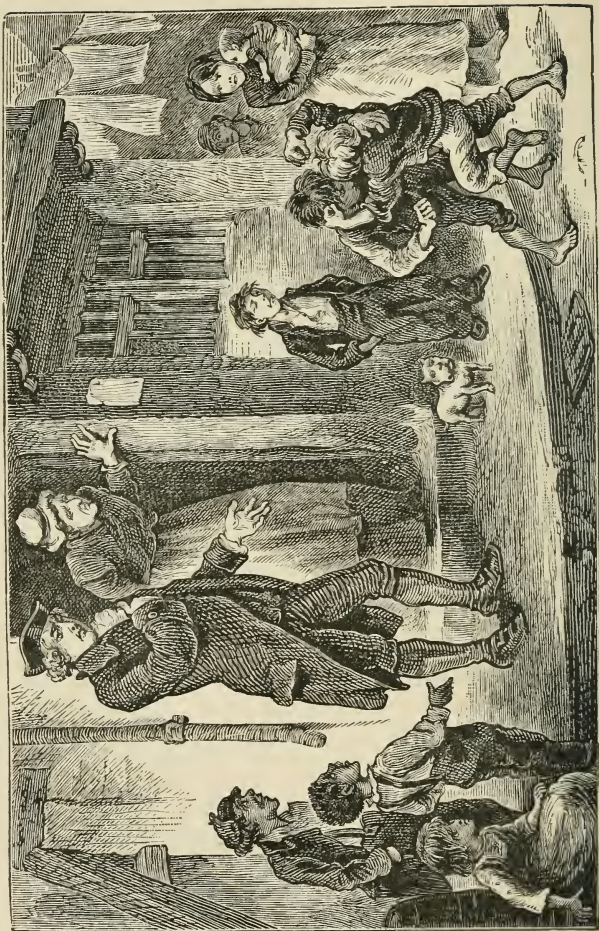
7. Another of the old conditions of prosperity, but which never becomes antiquated, is a kindred missionary spirit to that which actuated the Fathers, to gather numbers anew into the schools. Secular education has made wonderful strides, in respect to the number attending school, during the past ten years, thanks to the working of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. This has gone up at a very marked ratio during the first decade of the Act. The number of children on the school registers in England and Wales in the year 1870 was 1,949,076; while in 1880 it was 3,895,824, that is to say, it had actually doubled. Ten years ago there was room in our elementary schools for only 1,878,584 scholars, there is now accommodation for 4,240,753. The average attendance was, in 1870, 1,152,380, and in 1880, 2,750,916. Which claim the most adherents at the present day in Wales, the day schools or Sunday Schools? It will be remembered that the statistics of the latter refer always to number on books and not to average attendance. Comparisons, therefore, in order to be trustworthy, must be based on these data. From the Appendix to the Education Report, we have computed the number in average attendance in elementary schools under inspection, and according to the above ratio for England and Wales, the number on the registers, for *SOUTH Wales and Monmouthshire*, for the year ending March 31, 1882. We here subjoin the particulars:—

Counties.	Population.	Average Attendance.	Percentage.
Brecknock	57,735	6,612	11·4
Cardigan	70,226	7,083	10·0
Caermarthen	124,861	14,684	11·7
Glamorgan	511,672	61,000	11·9
Pembroke	91,308	10,088	11·0
Radnor	23,539	3,173	13·4
Monmouth	211,374	24,840	11·7
Total	1,090,715	127,480	11·7

Number on register in Elementary schools	180,326
" " Private schools	2,854
" " Endowed and Proprietary	1,224
Total	184,404
Percentage to population	16·9

We have already found* that the percentage of population belonging to the Sunday Schools for the *whole* of Wales and Monmouth was 34·1, and therefore, assuming the percentage of the above table to be the same for all Wales, the Sunday Schools will compare very favourably with the day schools. But it will be remembered that a large proportion of the members of Sunday Schools are adults, and the question is, how about the children? Assuming that the children are about the half, which, taking all the schools together, is rather under than over the mark, the percentage is 17, and so the palm, under all circumstances, belongs hitherto to the Sunday Schools. But what of the future? An all-powerful agency is at the command of the School Boards—the compulsory powers—and in future this will tell mightily on the average attendance in day schools. State interference cannot, under any garb, be entertained as applicable to Sunday Schools. The same spirit which has divorced religious teaching in the day schools from State aid and control, must also frown at the idea of getting a state-paid attendance officer as a functionary of the Sunday Schools. Not only is the State not allowed to be a pedagogue, in the modern sense of the word, to *impart* religious knowledge to children, it will not be permitted to discharge the humbler duties of *pedagogos*, in its original and primary meaning, to *lead* the children to the schools. How, then, is this defect to be supplied? The same as hitherto, on the never-failing principle of voluntary agency. What has been done already ought to be looked upon as a sure earnest of what can be done again. The good old custom must be still kept up, where found existing, and revived where it has fallen into desuetude, of sending visitors round the houses, not, indeed, armed with the terrors of the civil officer, but with benignant smiles and earnest entreaties to enlist recruits to the noble army. In past time, by song and procession were children roused, some from cheerful homes, others from dens of misery, and others from their play, to leave all behind, and place themselves under religious training. Many are still living, who can testify to the enchanting power of those words, wedded to simple music, on their mind, “Holl blant y wlad, i'r Ysgol Sul, pa'm na ddowch, pa'm na ddowch?” (All children to the Sunday School why not come, why not come?) These means must still be resorted to; for the friends of religion and morality should

* Page 352.



"THE ROCK FROM WHENCE THEY WERE HEWN."

not rest satisfied without keeping the Sunday Schools, even in respect to children, at least equal to the day schools. All parts of the country should emulate the county of Merioneth, which Sir T. Phillips has put down to be forty-six per cent. in his days, and one town of which in these days reaches 61·4 of the population.

To swell the numbers, much greater attention than has hitherto been the case must be given in Welsh schools to the infant classes. This department has been almost entirely neglected in our Welsh institution. Now, it has been proved to demonstration, over and over again, in the English schools, that from thirty to fifty infants, between the ages of three and six, can be easily handled by one teacher, in a class-room, arranged in small galleries, and taught the alphabet, spelling, and very simple Scripture narratives, in a peculiarly interesting manner. With the aid of the models, prints, and specimens, already described, the teaching becomes delightful and the children's enjoyment intense. One writer, summing up the peculiarity of this kind of teaching, says, "The great advantage of collective teaching is, that it brings the trained mind of the teacher into direct and immediate communication with the comparatively untrained minds of his pupils. Hence for the development of the powers of the mind, for influencing the affections, and directing the understanding to right views of moral and spiritual truths, for checking evil habits, and encouraging good ones, the collective lesson, in the hands of a well-trained, earnest-minded Christian teacher, is a powerful instrument for good."

The indirect influence of such training also should not be overlooked. The children are accustomed from their very infancy to attend school, and with the special provisions of the Welsh schools to meet the case of adults, the ranks of the aged and the departed will ever be supplied from these recruits. Following faithfully the advice of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go," the consequences pronounced by him may also be expected to be realized, "and when he grows old he will not depart from it." Whatever phases our schools are destined to go through in the future, it is to be fondly hoped that this peculiarity will never be lost, of uniting young, middle-aged, and old people under one roof for the purposes of religious instruction.

8. The last condition of the future prosperity of our schools which we shall specify, is what has been their most prominent aim

from the beginning, viz. a never-failing faithfulness on the part of the teachers to impress religious and moral truths on the minds of the rising generation, and train them up to virtuous and God-fearing habits. The great object of cultivating the intellect ought to be the ultimate improvement of the emotions and the will. Unless, therefore, the truths of the Bible be continually brought to bear on the conscience and the heart, the whole effect of intellectual training will only be to multiply sinners in the land, by rendering men shrewder in the exercise of their wicked and depraved passions. During the past hundred years this high object has been steadily kept in view, and though the backward state of many a populous town, and some country villages, has still to be deplored, nevertheless we have evident reasons for saying, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad." Standing on the boundary line of the two centuries, looking back to the past under the clear light of accomplished facts and well-defined experience, but endeavouring to discern the gloomy landscape of the future, through surmises and probabilities, one cannot help feeling the great weight of responsibility which this most valuable trust of our forefathers imposes upon their descendants. They worked up the scheme into its present state of efficiency under greater difficulties than any which appear to be possible for us. The teachers were few, their disqualifications numerous, and the supply of Bibles and text-books scanty and uncertain; with every external circumstance in our favour, it would be a matter of lasting shame not to be able to hand over the institution to our posterity in a state at least equal to that in which it came down to us.

Within the last hundred years it has given to the country some thousands of teachers zealous for the moral regeneration of the world. Sunday Schools in Wales have been the only colleges in which many an eminent servant of Christ has been trained to the work of the ministry. Missionaries have gone forth, carrying their life, as it were, in their hands, to preach "the unsearchable riches of Christ" among pagans and idolaters, who received their first impulse to the good work while sucking "the pure milk of the word" on the breasts of the Sabbath Schools; and great is the company of the saved ones on the hills of immortality who have been first led to Jesus by the hand of the Sunday-School teacher, and who in their turn have been the means of bringing others to

the same refuge. Collecting the harvest, as it were, from various directions, this noble institution can now point to a grand galaxy of wise men who "shine as the brightness of the firmament," and because they have turned many into righteousness, will continue "as the stars for ever and ever."

Wales is often pointed out as a pattern to all other parts of her Majesty's dominions for its respect to law and assiduous cultivation of all social virtues. Who can say how much this state of moral proficiency has been indebted to the influence of this heavenly agency? What frightful amount of Sabbath breaking, profaneness, disorder, and ungodliness, which were rampant at the end of last century, must, therefore, have been expelled before the glorious light of Scriptural instruction? But it ought always to be borne in mind that such evil practices are ever ready to return, and not seldom with redoubled boldness and persistency, unless held in check by constant activity and watchfulness. Evil weeds grow apace. They may be expelled by force for a time, but immediately the activity is suspended, up they spring at once, as if by magic. "*Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret.*" Profane swearing, Sabbath desecration, disrespect towards superiors, disregard of law and order, besides the worse phases of drunkenness, and all concomitant immorality, are ever ready to revive unless restrained by a healthy public opinion. And in Wales nothing has been more effectual in creating and directing this high moral tone than the presence of her Sunday Schools.

The hand of Providence, indeed, has been plainly visible in interposing with this beneficent instrumentality just at the time when the population of the country was beginning to assume its present rapid ratio of increase. Monmouthshire and Glamorgan-shire, of all the counties of England and Wales, have made the most rapid strides in population since the beginning of the present century. Then we had hardly an assemblage of houses worthy of the name of town; now towns can be reckoned by tens, and some will bear comparison with the most prosperous of our English neighbours. How thankful ought we to feel that parallel with this material growth was a most effectual remedial development. Just at the time that the first practically successful locomotive in the kingdom, patented to Trevethick and Vivian in 1802, was puffing its way on the tram-road near Merthyr Tydfil in 1804, at the rate

of five miles an hour, with a net load of ten tons, thereby becoming the inaugurator of the means of opening the mineral resources of the county, this moral regenerator made its appearance in a powerfully nascent state. What would have been the state of the teeming population of the mining districts of Glamorgan, Caermarthen, Monmouth, and Flint, had not this institution been developed contemporaneously with the development of their mineral resources? How comfortable is the thought that as the blast furnaces of Dowlais, Tredegar, and Ebbw Vale, were summoning their thousands to earn their daily bread by means of the industry created thereby, this Divine illuminator exerted its influence to frighten the hideous forms of crime always attendant on moral darkness, and to bring them to labour also not for "the bread which perisheth, but that which lasteth into life everlasting." In North Wales again, some years before the blasting of the rock cannon was reverberating among the mountains of Caernarvon and Merioneth, to open the rich natural wealth of their slate quarries, had Sunday Schools been organized in every village and hamlet, and were then ready to supply the rapidly increasing population with a safeguard from moral degeneracy and the means of rising to the highest possible life.

The resources of our country are not yet exhausted, nor the increase of population arrested. The coal mines of the South, and the slate quarries of the North, are still growing in number and importance. The large towns of both parts of the Principality show a steady growth from decade to decade. It is not improbable that larger ports than even Cardiff, Swansea, and Llanelly, will be rising to meet the ever-increasing commerce of the empire, upon the great natural harbours of Milford Haven, Holyhead, and other favourable inlets; and the question is, will the Sunday Schools prove adequate to supply the religious training of the future as they have done in the past? Our work of reviewing, however imperfectly accomplished, is now over. At the expiration of another hundred years, probably abler hands will undertake a similar labour of love. Whatever peculiarity that performance will assume, we hope it will contain the same account of devotedness to overcome ignorance, indifference, and ungodliness; that it will be able to point to a greater "fruit of holiness" in this world as the result of Sunday School labours, and to a greater number of their members attaining "to life everlasting in the world to come."

INDEX.

- Abergavenny Grammar School, 77
Aberystwith, first Sunday School at, 196
Adult Sunday Schools, 175 ; the Bristol Society, 216 ; American adult Schools, 217 ; adult scholars in Sunday Schools, 218, 219, 265, 268, 273 ; proportion of adult scholars to whole school, 220 ; statistics of adult scholars in the Welsh Sunday Schools of Liverpool, 221, 222 ; adults' subjects of study, 222, 223, 266, 267, 269, 273
Appliances of instruction, 380-382
Arminian controversy, the great, 134
Art of teaching, 370, 374-383
Associations, Sunday School, 238-241 ; recent annual, 292
Augustine, the monk, and representatives of the Ancient British Church, 4, 5

Bala, Grammar School, *see* "Llanycil;" *locale* of Charles's first Sunday School, 181 ; other connections with Charles, *see* "Charles"
Bangor Grammar School, 75
Beaumaris Grammar School, 75
Bevan, Madam, conversion, 93 ; her schools, 102, 164-166 ; her charity, 102-104
Bible, royal proclamation for translation of, into Welsh, 15, 23 ; Dr. Morgan's assistants, 25 ; various editions, 28, 31-40 ; table of editions up to year 1799, 41-43 ; rate of distribution before 1800, 43, 44 ; notes on first editions, 45-47 ; facsimile of titlepage to Dr. Morgan's, 48
Bible-teaching in Grammar Schools, 82, 83 ; in Board Schools, 356-359
Book of sports, 108, 117 ; opposition to it by Welsh Nonconformists, 120, 121
Bottwnog school, 75
Brecon, Christ College, 81, 82
British and Foreign Bible Society and Sunday Schools of Wales, 295-312

Bunhill Fields, London, the burial-place of Vavasor Powell, 124
 Burghley, Lord, Penry's letter to, 114-116

Caermarthen Grammar School, 80

Cambrian Bibliography, 52

Cardigan Grammar School, 79

Cardiff, first dissenting cause at, 121; statistics of Sunday Schools, 354

Carnhuanawc, on the Ancient British Church, 12

Catechising, public, 237, 238, 249, 250, 285-292

Charles, Rev. David, D.D., at the unveiling of his grandfather's statue, 336

Charles, Rev. Thomas, portrait of, *frontispiece*; early years, 139, 147; at Caermarthen, 148; at Oxford, 149, 150; at Olney, 150; marriage, 151; curacies in Wales, 151, 152; leaves Church of England and joins the Methodists, 152-154; founder of the Sunday-School system in Wales, 163; his first itineracies, 166, 167; establishes circulating schools, 167-170; letters on the circulating and Sunday Schools, 171-174; initiates adult schools, 175; merges the circulating in Sunday Schools, 176, 177; his first Sunday School, 178, 183; literary works, 184-190; Sunday-School textbooks, 184; Mary Jones's visit to him, 299-301; his connection with the Bible Society, 301; his claims to be considered its father, 303-308; the last fifteen years of his life, 314-332; his illness in 1799, 315; remarkable prayer on his behalf, 315, 316; prepares copy of Welsh Bible, 316; visits Ireland, 317-319; connection with the Gaelic Society, 319-321; literary labours, 321, 322; direct services to his own denomination, 322; his share in the first ordination, 323; an explanation of the charge of inconsistency made against him, 323-326; direct support to Sunday Schools, 326-329; last illness and death, 329-332; the ceremony of unveiling his statue, 333-340; Judge Johnes on his character, 339, 340

Church, the Ancient British, 2, 4, 5; resistance to Popery, 6; Augustin Thierry on her struggles, 7; state at time of Reformation, 8, 9

Cilycwm, near Llandovery, an early Sunday School at, 160

Circulating schools of Griffith Jones, 92-103; of Madam Bevan, 102, 164-166; of Mr. Charles, 167-170

Commissioners of 1881, *Preface* x., 71, 72, 74, 83, 84, 357; of 1846, 259-283, 321, 375

Controversies, religious, in Wales, 134, 225-235

Conventicle Act, 125

Cowbridge Grammar School, 78

Cradoc, Rev. Walter, at Wrexham, 67; his education, 74; connection with Wroth, 120; his sermon before Parliament, 120; sketch of life, 121, 122

Crawlom, near Llanidloes, an early Sunday School at, 158, 159

Cwmduddwr School, 81

Davies, Rev. Howell, of Pembrokeshire, 101, 142

Davies, Dr. John, of Mallwyd, 29, 57-59

- Davies, Mr. R., of Aberystwith, 196, 197
 Davies, Rev. Richard, D.D., his introductory letter to Salesbury's New Testament quoted, 13, 30; his share in translating it, 18; sketch of life, 20, 21; the Bishops' Bible, 21
 Davies, Rev. Walter (Gwallter Mechain), on Norman families in Wales, 17
 Denbigh, Grammar School, 76; Howell's School, 83
 Derfel Gadarn, a huge rood, 8
 Denio School, 75
 Deythur Grammar School, 77
 Dolgelley Grammar School, 76; Dr. Williams's Endowed School for Girls, 84; first Sunday School, 207, 208
 Dunod, Abbot of Bangor-is-coed, 4

 Edwards, Charles, 68, 69
 Edwards, Rev. John, on state of country, 110
 Edwards, Rev. Lewis, D.D., of Bala, on Morgan Llwyd of Gwynedd, 68; on peculiarity of Welsh Sunday Schools, 214, 215; his questions on the Holy Spirit, 288, 289; assisting at the unveiling of Charles's statue, 335
 Endowments of Wales, 84, 102-104
 Erbury, Rev. William, 121
 Evans, Dr. John, his statistics of early Nonconformist Churches, 130, 162
 Evans, Rev. John, of Bala, on state of country before rise of Methodism, 135, 136
 Examinations, written, 293, 294; oral, *see* "Catechising" and "Associations"

 Festiniog, early schools at, 192; statistics, 244, 245
 Field, Dr. Theophilus, of Llandaff, 120
 Five-mile Act, 125
 Fuller, Thomas, on Salesbury's Dictionary, 53

 Gelligaer, Grammar School, 79; Rev. P. Thomas of, and circulating schools, 98, 99; Sir William Lewis and charity, 118
 "Gododin," The, 50
 Gouge, Rev. Thomas, and edition of Welsh Bible, 35, 88; his literary productions, 68; Charles Edwards's remarks on his beneficence, 68, 69; sketch of life, 85-91; portrait, 86
 Grammar Schools of Wales, 75-85

 Hallam, his remarks on Penry, 116
 Harris, Howell, 133, 139, 140, 142, 143; his "Family," at Trefecca, 144, 146; labours and trials, 145
 Haverfordwest Grammar School, 77
 Hengoed, Baptist Church of, 131; early Sunday School, 161, 162
 Henry, Rev. Phillip, persecution of, 126
 Heylin, Mr. Rowland, 31, 59, 64

- Huet, Thomas, 21
- Hughes, Rev. John, author of *Methodistiaeth Cymru*, 139
- Hughes, Rev. Joseph, of Battersea, and Bible Society, 301-308
- Hughes, Rev. Stephen, life of, 33-35; Calamy's remarks on, 126
- Hughes, Dr. William, 107, 108
- Hughes, Rev. W., of Llanuwchllyn, and Mr. Charles, 323-326
- Infants in Sunday Schools, 381, 387
- Inspection of Schools, 247, 249
- Johnes, Judge, on scarcity of Bibles, 30; on "The Candle of the Welsh," 65, 66; on the persecutions of the Stuart period, 124; on Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, 126; on the early Nonconformists, 132; on state of country before the Methodist revival, 137, 138; on Madam Bevan's schools, 166; on Charles's work and character, 339, 340
- Johnson, a Commissioner; his Report on Sunday Schools of North Wales, 271
- Jones, Rev. David, of Llandysilio, and edition of Welsh Bible, 35
- Jones, Rev. Griffith, of Llanddowror, and edition of Welsh Bible, 37; life of, 92-102; his apology for Dissenters, 127; his works, 173 *note*, 237
- Jones, Mr. John, of Penyparc, near Towyn, 195, 205, 207
- Jones, Rev. John, of Talsarn, extracts from his Memoir, 230-235
- Jones, Mary, of Abergynolwyn, sketch of life, 296-301, 311-313
- Jones, Rev. Owen, of Gelli, an account of his life, 193-202; portrait, 194
- Jones, Rev. Robert, of Rhoslan, 164, 165, 193
- Jones, Rev. Thomas, of Creaton, and Welsh Bible, 40, 302, 303
- Jones, Rev. Thomas, of Denbigh, on Charles and his schools, 162, 163; co-operating with him, 169; his remarks on Charles's action at the first ordination, 325
- Kyffin, Morris, 56
- Levi, Rev. Thomas, at the unveiling of Charles's statue, 338
- Lewis, Pierce, of Anglesea, 36
- Lewis, Rev. W. Dickens, at the unveiling of Charles's statue, 338
- Lewis, Sir William, of the Fan; his descendants, 79; and Wroth, 118
- Liberality of Sunday-School Members, 252
- Lingen, a Commissioner, his Report on Sunday Schools of part of South Wales, 262-267; criticisms thereon, 275-280
- Llandaff, Howell's school at, 83
- Llandovery, *see* "Rhys Prichard;" Grammar School, 80
- Llanegryn Grammar School, 76; Lewis Williams and its scholars, 204
- Llanidloes, Rev. Owen Jones's labours there, 199
- Llanrwst Grammar School, 76
- Llantilio Croesenau Grammar School, 78
- Llanyceil Grammar School, 76
- Lledrod Grammar School, 79

- Llewellyn, Dr. Thomas, historian of Welsh Versions of Scripture, 29, 38, 39, 45-47
- Lloyd, Dr. Humphrey, of Denbigh, 55
- Lloyd, Mr. Morris, of Trawsfynydd, 244, 250
- Lloyd, Dr. William, and edition of Welsh Bible, 36
- Llwyd, Rev. Morgan, of Gwynedd, 67, 68; succeeds Cradoc, 121
- Mabinogion, 49, 50
- Mann, Mr. Horace, on senior classes, 215, 216
- Mansel, Sir Lewis, of Margam and Wroth, 119
- Martin Mar-prelate, Penry's share in production, 116
- Metaphysics and the Welsh, 269, 280, 373; how bearing on the science of education, 370-374
- Methodism, Calvinistic, in Wales, 129-147
- Methodism, Wesleyan, in Wales, 142, 143, 226-229, 234, 235
- Methodistiaeth Cymru*, 139, quoted *passim*
- Methodists, Calvinistic, and Church of England, 144, 145; strength in 1881, 146, 147
- Methods of teaching, 364-367, 374-380
- Meyrick, Dr., 107
- Ministers and Sunday Schools, 292
- Missionary spirit, 384-390
- Model lessons, 379
- Monmouth Grammar School, 78
- Montgomeryshire and Rev. Owen Jones, 201
- Morgan, Rev. Edward, of Syston, on state of country, 110, 111; on Charles's first Sunday School, 180
- Morgan, Rev. Jenkin, 158, 177, 193
- Morgan, Dr. William, sketch of life, 23-28, 108
- Morris, Mr. Lewis, remarks on commission of 1846, 261
- Morys, Rhisiart o Fôn, 37
- Myddleton, Hugh, 31
- Myddleton, Sir Thomas, Rev. S. Hughes's prayer on his behalf, 32
- Myddleton, William, 31; his metrical version of Psalms, 55, 56, 63
- Newmarket Grammar School, 77
- New Testament, translation of, into Welsh, 16, 18; facsimile of titlepage to Salesbury's, 22; explanation of titlepage, 19, 45; various editions, 32, 33, 38, 40; table of all the editions up to 1800, 42; notes on Salesbury's edition, 44, 45
- Newton, Rev. John, of Olney, and Charles, 150, 152
- Nonconformists, origin of term, 125; strength in Wales before Methodist revival, 130-135
- Normal classes, 369
- Order and discipline in Sunday Schools, 366, 367
- Ordinance of Long Parliament with reference to Wales, 109, 110
- Owen, Rev. James, of Oswestry, 87, 126
- Parry, Dr. Richard, and authorized Welsh version of Scriptures, 28, 29

- Pembroke Grammar School, 81
 Penry, John, sketch of life, 112-117
 Persecutions in Wales, 112-128
 Phillips, Sir T., on causes of degeneracy of Church of England in Wales, 111; on progress of early dissent, 130; on power of memory in the Kelts, 246; on revivals, 254-256; on Charles and the Gaelic Society, 321; his Sunday-School statistics, 346-352
 Powell, Dr. David, of Ruabon, 25, 55, 108
 Powell, Rev. Vavasor, sketch of life, 123, 124
 Preparation for class, 382, 383
 Presteign Grammar School, 81
 Prichard, Rev. Rhys, *alias* Vicar Prichard, stanza to the small Bible, 32; sketch of life, 60-67; on state of country, 108, 109; his "Candle of the Welsh," a text-book in early Sunday Schools, 159
 Prydderch, Rev. John, of Anglesea, 250
 Prys, Rev. Edmund, life of, 56, 57
 Psychology and Education. *See* "Metaphysics"
 Puritanism, in the reign of Elizabeth, 117; under the Stuarts, 117, 118
 Pwllheli, an early Sunday School at, 159
Pwngol *Ysgol*, a specimen, 188, 189; how prepared and applied, 238-240, 264, 265
- Questioning, objectionable style of, 285, 286; hints on good, 286, 375-379, 382, 383
 Questions, on "The Work of the Holy Spirit," 288, 289; on "The Life of Jesus Christ," 288, 289-292
- Raikes, founder of Sunday Schools of England, 157, 163, 164, 250, 251, 252; his portrait, 157; view of monument, 341
 Reed, Sir Charles, his Report on Sunday Schools of Wales, 271-275;
 Rees, Mr. R. Oliver, of Dolgelley, 202, 211, 296, 313
 Rees, Dr. Thomas, of Swansea, on the early Nonconformists, 130; on the Fathers of Methodism, 131; on the Arminian controversy, 134; on the persecution of early Nonconformists and Methodists, 145; on early Sunday Schools, 161; on Charles's first Sunday School, 181, 182
 Revivals, at Aberystwith, 198, 199; in connection with schools, 209, 253; remarks on, 254-256
 Rhayader on the Wye, first Sunday School, 200
 Rhys, Dr. John David, 55
 Rhys, Morgan John, of Hengoed, 162, 163
 Richard, Rev. Ebenezer, of Tregaron, 211, 212
 Richard, Mr. Henry, on the Welsh and their literature, 70, 71; on the Methodist revival, 129; on the Commissioners of 1846, 260, 261; his Memorandum to Commissioners' Report of 1881, 357
 Roberts, Dr. Griffith, and Welsh literature, 54, 55
 Roberts, Mr. John, M.P. for the Flint boroughs, at the unveiling of Charles's statue, 333, 336, 337

Rowlands, Rev. Daniel, of Llangeitho, 74, 101, 139, 140; his connection with Charles, 148, 155, 255, 256
 Ruabon Grammar School, 77
 Ruthin Grammar School, 77

Salesbury, William, sketch of life, 15-20; issues first printed Welsh book, 52; his other books, 53, 54

Schools, ordinary 'day, 84, 105; of Rev. T. Gouge, 87, 91; those of present time, 384

Science of Education, 370-374

Shaftesbury, Earl of, and presentation Bible, 312; letter on occasion of unveiling Charles's statue, 335

Shrewsbury, Rev. Owen Jones's labours at, 200; St. Chad's Sunday School, 200

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and editions of Welsh Bible, 36-41

Standards in Sunday Schools, 283-285

St. Asaph, early manuscript of Four Gospels at, 12; Grammar School, 77

Statistics, of Scriptures supplied to Wales, 43, 44, 308, 309; of Griffith Jones's Schools, 97, 102; of Sunday Schools, 221, 244, 267, 273, 280, 346-354; of contributions to Bible Society, 310; general remarks on, 342-344; of attendance at day schools, 384

St. David's, superstitious practices at, 9; school, 81; clergy of, 108

Swansea Grammar School, 79

Symons, a commissioner, his Report on Sunday Schools of a part of South Wales, 267-271; criticisms thereon, 280-285

Tarn, Rev. Joseph, 301; his letters to Charles, 305-307

Thierry, Augustin, on the early Welsh Church, 6, 7, 9; on devotion of Welsh to literature, 51

Thirlwall, Dr., his tablet to Dr. Davies, 21

Thomas, Rev. Owen, D.D., of Liverpool, on Welsh Religious Controversies, 230-235

Tillotson, Dr., on Mr. Gouge, 88-90

Toy, Humphrey, 19

Traethodydd and Sunday Schools, 235

Training classes, 367-380

Trawsfynydd, an early Sunday School at, 182

Triads, The Welsh, 49, 50

Triers, Walter Cradoc one of the, 122

Uniformity, Act of, 125

Unions, District, 242-250

Usk Grammar School, 78

Vychan, Rowland, of Caergai, 59

- Wales, peculiar features of, 1, 2, 3; martyrs of, at time of Reformation, 10; Tudor princes and, 10; morality of, 267, 274, 275, 279, 389; material prosperity of, 389, 390; prospects, 390
- Welsh literature, different periods of, 49, 50, 51; statistics of, 71, 72
- Welsh manuscripts, destruction of, 14
- Welsh versions of Scripture in manuscript, 11, 12; Bishop Davies' remarks on, 13; during Middle Ages, 15
- Wharton, Thomas, Baron, and edition of Welsh Bible, 35, 36
- Williams, Dr. Edward, of Oswestry, and catechetical schools, 161
- Williams, Rev. Lewis, of Llanfachreth, sketch of life, 202-211; Mary Jones's teacher, 207
- Williams, Rev. Moses, of Defynog, 36, 37, 50
- Williams, Rev. Peter, and editions of Bible, 39, 40
- Williams, Mr. T. M., on Sunday Schools, 344
- Williams, Sir Thomas, of Trefriw, 58
- Williams, Rev. W., of Glangwenlas, on early Sunday Schools, 160
- Williams, Rev. W., of Pantycelyn, 65, 101
- Williams, Rev. W., of Swansea, on early Nonconformists, 135; on adults in Sunday Schools, 223-225; on Calvinistic Methodists and Established Church, 326
- Works on the science and art of teaching, 380
- Wrexham, early dissenting cause at, 67, 121; Grammar School, 77
- Wroth, Rev. Mr., of Llanfaches, sketch of life, 118-120
- Wyn, Ellis, of Lasynys, 70
- Wynne, Sir John, on Dr. Davies, 21; his remarks on Dr. Morgan as translator, 26
- Ystrad-Meirig Grammar School, 80

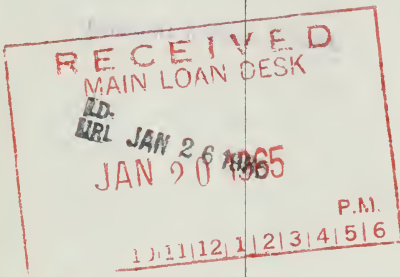
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